

PERSONAL

There is, evidently (*The Times*, November 23) a marked trend away from prepackaged cheese, towards the real thing, cut from a whole cheese, before our eyes, the weight and freshness of our choice. Nor is this trend confined to cheese. Supermarkets, we learn, are increasingly obliged to sell fresh food, baking their own bread, cutting up, if not actually killing, their own meat, and certainly making their own fresh pasta.

All this makes it hard for the cooking snob, who prides himself on serving only fresh food, cooked at home. It is more and more difficult to distinguish his home-made bread from the home-made bread of Harrods, his chicken Kiev from that of Marks and Spencer. He will soon have to invite his guests into the kitchen to see with their own eyes the tagliatelli lung over the backs of chairs, if they are to believe he didn't buy it ready strung out.

Despite this drawback, the new passion for the real is an advance in taste and must be welcomed. It is not that we are being asked to give up convenience for the sake of reality. There is nothing intrinsically convenient for the consumer in having to buy cheese in impenetrable plastic armour;

and fresh pasta is twice as quick to cook as the old packaged kind. The victory of the real over the fake seems to be universal, given time. Think of mince-filled fibres. I can recall the excitement, after the war, of getting a present of nylon underclothes from the United States. They were wonderfully white and slippery, and they would never wear out. That they soon turned a strange greenish grey, and were hot and uncomfortable to wear, I put down to faults in myself. Nylon was to be the material of the future, and we had to like it. Only gradually did it become clear that nylon and all its successors, crimplene, dralon, the lot, were intolerable. Only fairly recently has absolutely everyone trilled round the shops demanding cotton and wool. Who in the world would now voluntarily sleep between nylon sheets?

Perhaps, then, there is a law that eventually people will prefer the better to the worse, the real to the fake. It was so. And after all it is the faith of education that there is such a law; without such optimistic hope teachers would hardly be able to carry on their trade. Though parents tend to hold that their own children's needs must



Mary Warnock

seek the lower when they see it, teachers are professionally committed to the opposite view.

We may perhaps be seeing the law in operation, though weakly and waveringly so far, in the field of broadcasting. The investigation of *Which?* recently showed that people watch less

television than they did, and that they don't, on the whole, want breakfast television at all. But the signs, though faint, are good.

As far as breakfast television goes, it may be a sign that so much of the operation of the reality law, as of plain common sense. Before breakfast television was introduced, there were dreadful forebodings, expressed at all the public meetings, that children would refuse to go to school, seduced as they would be by the Mission to Explain. Awful pictures were painted of people too deeply hooked on last night's news even to go out and collect their dole money. As things are, there is no one with a mission of any kind on the screen, but equally no one is seduced. Apart from those whose clock has gone to the menders, or whose children have taken the only radio into the bathroom, people don't on the whole watch television in the mornings.

But fewer hours of other television? We know that the drop in viewing hours is caused more by a switch to video than by a sudden upsurge of critical opinion in the public. And we also know that much of the video material watched is of a nastiness unimaginable on regular television.

Nevertheless, I am not sure that the signs are wholly gloomy. After all, we went through a phase of thinking that even nylon sheets were what we wanted. Now we know better. And at least video is getting us used to the world of free choice. What could be more innocent and beneficial than to be able to choose, as some young unemployed of my acquaintance do, who can't afford to go out on the evenings, to sit at home every day for a week watching *Some Like It Hot*? And next week it can be something equally excellent.

When cable comes, the choices will be far greater, and the spirit of educational optimism, the belief that people will at last prefer the better to the worse, must be the guiding faith of those who are to make decisions in the new field. The decision-makers will be looking closely at the market, their interests predominantly commercial. But the market will gradually display an improving taste. As things now are, the law may have to intervene to control the nasties. Later, the nasties, and the phones and the bad, may be excluded by those same commercial considerations which are forcing the supermarkets to bake bread on the premises. That must be our hope.

DIARY

ILEA is looking good for survival

To County Hall for an impressive ILEA unity parade. Ms Frances Morris seemed to have issued a sartorial fibre like whip, the men actually put on ties, the women their best frocks.

The only absentee was Tory leader, David Smith, who professes radicalism at King's College Dental School. We were told he was examining students, but with us in spirit.

His absence was amply compensated for by one of his deputies, Herbert Sandford, who waxed eloquent about the absurdities of his Government's proposals: "Gargles of borough councillors." "A rag bag of joint boards and quangos."

The assembled bishops and peers listened to the proceedings with careful attention; it is the House of Lords which will act as a final appeal court on the Government's proposals, when they have a chance to vote on the legislation next summer.

If you can get decent odds on ILEA's survival as a directly elected authority, I'd risk a couple of fivers. The authority has been in difficulties before and, like Jack, with one bound, escaped free. I certainly haven't yet written off the possibility of direct elections.

Another soap?

An ILEA gathering to which I was not invited last week was its confrontation with Mr Eric Bolton and his HMI's, who reported on the sociology and applied social studies departments at North London Polytechnic in Moy. It



Lord George Brown, Sir Charles Villiers and Donald Treford



was followed by a similar grilling before the court of the polytechnic on Monday.

My spies tell me that the whole episode, its relationships and its characters, are rich material for a *Dallas* of the DES, if some enterprising playwright were to go to work on it. HMI Inspector Mr Le Gouillon, a Hull History Man and the staff inspector who led the foray, clashing with his ex-DES mandarin colleague, and now poly-boss, David MacDowell about how long he'd spent discussing poly-problems. Le Gouillon said an hour, MacDowell, 17 minutes. MacDowell won the argument - he'd taped the conversation!

The female interest is provided by poly-scourge and Thatcher-enrolled Caroline (Baroness) Cox, who as head of sociology at the poly actually signed the CNA documents for the sociology degree which the Inspectors criticized. What next week's thrilling episode.

The serious point behind it all is the different assumptions of the protagonists, who remain light-years apart, about the relevance of A level as a proper initiation ceremony to the English system of higher education. Deep in the sub-strata of the HMI mind, A levels are crucial - and while they are some un-A-level-initiated mature ladies from Dartford, who told us about their splendid "problem solving" degree course, which is tragically going in the cuts; and some young enterprising YTS caterers and engineers from Islington - which I'm told by Mrs Olwyn Kinnock is the name of a "difficult" Welsh poet who wrote in English, for some obscure reason metamorphosed into a Gwent local government district and which is now easily immortalized by her husband's parliamentary patronage, concerning which I briefly divert.

I've invited me to a party to meet Cllr Radice on Monday, and since the invitation card bore a clenched fist and a red rose, I assumed it was a gathering of the party faithful; but seeing the editor of *The TES* and Sir Peter Swinerton-Dyer of the University Grants Commission there, I saw my mistake. It was a thoroughly catholic gathering at which, thanks to Baroness Cox, Sir

At the sharp end

In many schools, it has already done so as those who went to the painted chamber of the Royal Society of Arts last week, and listened to the students of Cranford Community College in Hounslow describing what life was like in their sixth-form, will know well.

I was pleased to see that at least one HMI Inspector, Mr Booth, was in attendance. The occasion was the presentation of three of the RSA's recognized "Education for Capability" projects - not a prizegiving, the various RSA "fellows" present insisted to me. The others were, first, some un-A-level-initiated mature ladies from Dartford, who told us about their splendid "problem solving" degree course, which is tragically going in the cuts; and some young enterprising YTS caterers and engineers from Islington - which I'm told by Mrs Olwyn Kinnock is the name of a "difficult" Welsh poet who wrote in English, for some obscure reason metamorphosed into a Gwent local government district and which is now easily immortalized by her husband's parliamentary patronage, concerning which I briefly divert.

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Keith, Mr Dunn et al., Labour seems well on the way to recapturing the middle ground of educational politics. But back to the RSA which was also replete with bigwigs of a more Establishment kind - Lord George Brown, Sir Charles Villiers, Donald Treford. There was much complaint about A level there, too. The idea is good, but I suspect the RSA will have to raise itself just a little further out of its Establishment image if it is to progress its pet project further - learning to do things (capability) rather than to remember and regurgitate things (exams).

Devon's crisis

Rather than worrying about over-generous admissions, the HMI Inspectors should have a look at restrictions on entry to further education. In Devon there is a mini-crisis raging about the effect of the Youth Training Scheme on entry to colleges.

The county is £400,000 over budget and in danger of going into penalties if it tries to fulfil its obligations to both YTS and its "ordinary" further education clientele.

The problem has caused a financial crisis at Exeter College, the first of Britain's open tertiary colleges, and may force it to restrict its entry next year.

Devon blames the local authority associations' agreement with the Manpower Services Commission which forecast a 30 per cent shortfall in further education students after the introduction of YTS. In Devon it simply hasn't happened. At its behest, the Association of County Councils wants to meet the MSC again to renegotiate the agreement.

A fallen idol

A double disappointment at Imperial College: full of engineers as it is, I knew its students had few pretensions to oratory; but they might have mustered more than 13 souls for what was billed as the "debate of the year" - one motion which compared "Thatcher's secret state with Orwell's either me or Antony Flew, who professes philosophy at Reading, and seems to have become a trifle reactionary in the years since he was my philosophical idol. He praised Mr Atlee for concealing from Parliament expenditure on the atom bomb. As with Orwell, the Left was his fallen idol; he should have been at County Hall to see Ms Morrell and her smartened up troops. It might even have restored a socialist faith in his old age.

Christopher Price

No 130 CROSSWORD by Rufus

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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Across

1 Old trading mound (8)
2 It's had form in (4)
3 ... as your (4)
4 ... as your (4)
5 ... as your (4)
6 Day on TV (5)
7 Give a false impression (6)
8 This clue is yet to be found (12)
9 Mince pie and preserves in (10)
10 There's no end to it (7)
11 Take it if you mean to stay dry (5)
12 Loves an enigma to decipher (5)
13 An uplifting tune for singing (4)

Down

1 Stud manager (4)
2 New name given to one flower (7)
3 Agrees with someone in full - as your (4)
4 ... as your (4)
5 ... as your (4)
6 Day on TV (5)
7 Give a false impression (6)
8 This clue is yet to be found (12)
9 Mince pie and preserves in (10)
10 There's no end to it (7)
11 Take it if you mean to stay dry (5)
12 Loves an enigma to decipher (5)
13 An uplifting tune for singing (4)

Solution to puzzle No 129

1. Old trading mound (8)
2. It's had form in (4)
3. ... as your (4)
4. ... as your (4)
5. ... as your (4)
6. Day on TV (5)
7. Give a false impression (6)
8. This clue is yet to be found (12)
9. Mince pie and preserves in (10)
10. There's no end to it (7)
11. Take it if you mean to stay dry (5)
12. Loves an enigma to decipher (5)
13. An uplifting tune for singing (4)

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HMI blow to middle school hope for survival

by David Lister

Another city could face the dismantling of an entire system of middle schools as a long awaited national survey says that standards in the country's 9-13 schools are generally less than satisfactory.

The double blow to the increasingly fearful supporters of middle schools comes at the end of a year which has seen a number of authorities announce middle school closures and Staffordshire decide to end the system altogether in Stoke-on-Trent.

Now councillors and education officials in Humber-side are holding private meetings to discuss school reorganisation in Hull and are strongly considering dismantling the city's system of 53 9-13 middle schools.

The middle schools lobby has been awaiting for a considerable time the HMI survey of 9 to 13 schools to give them ammunition against local education authorities reconsidering the efficacy of these schools.

However, its publication this week - after a three-year delay - brought them little comfort. Less than half of the

HMI report, page 5

schools in the admittedly small survey were reaching generally satisfactory standards. Only 5 out of 48 were judged to have good curriculum standards, and another three reached satisfactory standards across most of the curriculum. Pastoral care in the schools was particularly praised.

In Humber-side councillors will publish a consultation document next March which is likely to put forward two options - a long-standing one would be to amalgamate several of the 9 to 13 middle schools, but the other more recent and as yet unpublicised option which is being seriously considered is to dismantle the system entirely and move to transfer at 11.

Mr Roger Ellis, chairman of the National Union of Teachers' national middle schools advisory panel and a Surrey middle school head, said that decisions to alter the age of transfer had already been made in Stoke, Wirral, and parts of East Sussex and Lincolnshire and that was causing concern among middle school teachers.

In addition, the employers accepted there would be extra costs involved in introducing the new entry grade - because it would mean giving newly-appointed teachers a lighter teaching load in their first year and providing them with support in the classroom.

It also looks as though both sides are near agreement on the introduction of a main professional grade for teachers which would follow the entry grade. Teachers' leaders believe those on the entry grade who are not up to scratch will have left the profession voluntarily by then - although they now acknowledge there will have to be some form of assessment at this stage. This will be



Roger Ellis

THIS WEEK

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NOTES
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Supine' UGC
University Grants Committee condemned for "supine acquiescence" at Association of University Teachers' conference

Heads' views
State school heads are starting to change their minds about the Assisted Places Scheme

Money's worth
Biddy Passmore on the DES report on spending and standards



It's going to be a computer Christmas. Popular brands of home computers are almost sold out all over the country, and manufacturers such as Sinclair, Acorn and Commodore have not been able to keep up with demand. Sinclair alone has sold more than 300,000 machines since October.

Salary scale restructuring deal nearer

by Richard Garner

Plans for a radical restructuring of teachers' salary scales have taken a significant stride forward following three days of intense discussions between employers and unions.

Teachers' leaders and local authority representatives, who met in Manchester this week, are now agreed that there should be an entry grade for newly-appointed teachers of either two or three years - from which teachers will then move on after being assessed.

In addition, the employers accepted there would be extra costs involved in introducing the new entry grade - because it would mean giving newly-appointed teachers a lighter teaching load in their first year and providing them with support in the classroom.

It also looks as though both sides are near agreement on the introduction of a main professional grade for teachers which would follow the entry grade. Teachers' leaders believe those on the entry grade who are not up to scratch will have left the profession voluntarily by then - although they now acknowledge there will have to be some form of assessment at this stage. This will be

very element in the restructuring. Joseph, the Education Secretary, to give financial support to the I.e.s. as for the restructuring operation.

However, there will have to be further discussions on this main professional grade as the teachers' side still oppose I.e.s. plans to allow the "good" classroom teachers to progress through the salary scales faster.

In addition, while both sides believe there should be some form of "super structure" on top of the professional grade - to give greater financial rewards to senior staff and heads of department - exact agreement on the shape of this has not been reached.

The big stumbling block to an agreement on restructuring is the management's insistence on job descriptions for teachers - which were sent out in a paper presented to the Manchester meeting this week.

There will be further talks early in the New Year but it is recognized that no agreement can now be reached in time for next year's salary negotiations. The I.e.s. are talking of financing the deal with help from the Government grant settlement for 1984-85.

Exam group wants 16-plus for all

by Nick Wood

The Secondary Examinations Council has unequivocally told the Education Secretary to scrap O levels and CSEs and replace them with a single exam for all children at 16-plus.

The council's response brings the prospect of a major exam reform much closer. It was asked by the Government to advise on the feasibility and desirability of introducing a common system and Sir Keith Joseph said the decision, to be announced in the second quarter of next year, will be taken on the basis of its conclusions.

The council has reached its judgment after examining draft criteria for the proposed new exam drawn up by the GCE and CSE boards. Its assessment took into consideration points of controversy raised by Sir Keith in his unilateral request to the boards' proposals.

"It is educationally feasible and desirable to implement a single system of examining using the national criteria as the basis for an extended and continuing programme of monitoring by us of the syllabuses and assessment procedures employed by the examining groups," the SEC says.

The SEC said that the new system of examining would be more informative and intelligible to teachers, parents, employers and others users of the examinations.

It sought to reassure Sir Keith Joseph that academic standards would not be put at risk by reform of the exam system.

Firm may lodge YTS losses claim

by Mark Jackson

A test case which could lead to claims for many millions of pounds from local authorities and businesses which have lost money on this year's Youth Training Scheme may be brought against the Manpower Services Commission.

The agency, Youth Training Resources Limited, has had its two youth training schemes in Hampshire closed down by the MSC, which has transferred the 128 trainees to other managing agents.

The MSC says it took this action because it was not satisfied with YTR's current financial position, but the agency's chief executive, former ILEA parliamentary candidate Mr Nicholas Westbrook, blames the Commission for its problems.

He is threatening to sue them for failing to fill the 440 places which he says they contracted with the organization. Mr Westbrook, a former official of the now-disbanded Air Transport and Travel Industry Training Board, set up YTR with some former colleagues last year and trained 183 youngsters in pilot schemes for the YTS which were widely praised.

With this record, he had little difficulty in getting area officials to back his participation in the YTS proper, and

Continued on page 3

Arts/Books

Hugh David looks at the political implications of GLC-funded fringe theatre; Brian Morton on the Right's propaganda; Roger Scruton; Andy Hargreaves on sociology at O level; Robin Buss on *The Day After*; Philippa Davidson on Le Corbusier's Indian music project; children's Christmas books

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Resources/Media

Susan Thomas on new

construction toys; Jacques Megarry on interactive video; Gillian Thomas on Heritage 84; Mary Hoffman previews *Citizen 2000*; Michael Clark reviews the video *Charles Dickens and Great Expectations*

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EXTRA

Religious Education: Can RE cope with religion? What are the possibilities for infants? How will the effective and the spiritual be assessed at 16-plus? What about the sixth-form and sex stereotyping in RE?

21-26

COMMENT

A touch of class

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since Lady Cox, Dr Marks and Dr Pomian-Szednicki published their *Standards in English Schools* in July of this year. This report, fathered by the National Council for Educational Standards, comprised the examination results of grammar and modern schools on the one hand, and comprehensive schools on the other, and found that, even after discounting for social class differences, there were reasons for expecting the selective schools to do better than the comprehensive.

The conclusions did not find universal support among competent reviewers. Lady Cox and Dr Marks, writing in *Education* on November 11, 1983, reviewed the adverse criticism which their work had received. Not surprisingly, they reacted strongly to suggestions that their work was coloured by their political views and retorted with some pointed comments about the political associations of some of those who had laid into them.

The dispute has culminated with exchanges between the authors of *Standards in English Schools* and the DES statisticians. A series of leaks to the press concentrated on the question of DES funding for further research by the NCES team. After some differences of opinion about statistical method had been hammered out at a meeting between Sir Keith and some of his officials and the authors of the report, the Secretary of State told Parliament in a written answer that, contrary to some press reports, the DES did not regard the *Standards in English Schools* as "seriously flawed". The accompanying statement acknowledged that there was no agreement among professionals on exactly how to take account of social and economic factors, but expressly drew attention to the limitations of the NCES study by expressing the belief that additional data would have allowed better adjustment for these factors to have been made.

Dr Marks and Lady Cox chose to send the DES statement as a retraction of earlier criticism - as, in a sense it was, because certain doubts about the sampling technique seem to have been removed by arguments which they put forward - but on the nub of the matter the DES statement is quite clear. When the DES says that "additional data would have allowed better adjustment for these (social and economic) factors to have been made" it is signifying doubts about conclusions based on the limited range of evidence which Cox, Marks and Pomian-Szednicki took into account. The DES "retraction", therefore, still amounts to a formidable criticism of the research, for who can be confident of conclusions which do not take account of all the evidence?

In present tricky circumstances, it is important to note that such criticism does not imply any moral deficiency on the part of those criticized: these ought to be the matters on which robust differences of view can be expressed without accusations of impropriety.

The ninth point remains whether the methods used by the NCES authors adequately allow for social class differences in the schools whose results were under examination. The NCES study found that about 30 per cent of the differences in examination achievement in different I.E.S.s could be attributed to social class. John Gray and Ben Jones, writing in *The TES* on July 15, by incorporating a measure of social advantage to balance the NCES use of a single measure of social disadvantage, arrived at a figure of about 70 per cent. Lady Cox and Dr Marks took issue with their calculations, and accused them of using a different and much cruder data base than their own. But this week there is a *School Standards and Spending* (see page 6) and this agrees with Gray and Jones, not Cox and Marks: it indicates that "between about two-thirds and three-quarters of the variation between I.E.S.s in their pupils' examination achievements may be related statistically to variables representing the social composition of the resident population."

Unfortunately, as a result of an article by Lady Cox and Dr Marks which appeared in *The Times* on November 7 and another by Ronald Butt, also in *The Times*, last week, the technical argument about a statistical

survey of school examinations has turned into a more general assault on the DES, and the allegation that Civil Servants have allowed their own "departmental" view to distort the advice they have given to the Secretary of State. This is quite untrue and no doubt Sir Keith Joseph will take an early opportunity to disown the accusation.

A *Yes Minister* squib in *The Sunday Times* provided an amusing commentary on the inherently improbable hypothesis that the NCES research had been savaged by the DES because the NUT wouldn't like it. In reality, the DES did nothing more than provide an assessment of the research which reflected the balance of opinion among professional researchers and which, notwithstanding the classification of points of detail, still casts considerable doubt on the conclusions of the "pioneering" study of the NCES team.

Unfortunately a lot of people are all too ready to believe the worst about the DES and it is much easier to succumb to this than attend to the difficult and contentious issues raised (but not settled) by Lady Cox, Dr Marks and Dr Pomian-Szednicki.

Worst of both worlds?

It's a sad but inevitable conclusion, after reading the HMI report on 9-13 middle schools (page 5) that, far from getting the best of both worlds, as the Plowden committee and others intended, the middle schools have often ended with the worst.

The report provides unusually interesting evidence on what makes for high standards in a middle school - apart from the obvious ingredient of a dynamic head. Good resources, for once, did seem to be clearly and significantly linked with good results. Bigger schools are better - perhaps because they can more easily field a full range of specialist teachers. And introducing 10 to 11-year-olds to specialist teaching produces what HMI consider the best standards of work.

Several things should be said in defence of the middle schools, in the light of this report. First, the study is



Listening and writing, not talking and doing...

seriously out of date: middle schools, like others, have no doubt been sharpening up their practice in the light of the Cockcroft report, the challenge of computers, and other factors in the continuing curriculum debate. Second, the report is based on a small and statistically unrepresentative sample.

Third, most of the detailed criticisms of teaching and learning can be found in HMI reports on schools at all levels, from first schools to sixth-form colleges. HMI rightly have a high standard for creative and intelligent teaching: it is all too easy to fall far short of it.

But the whole idea of the middle schools - especially the 9 to 13 ones, many of which were founded from conviction, not to fix the numbers game - was that they would be uniquely placed to meet the needs of the age group. They would be relatively free from exam pressures and syllabuses, and so able to provide a lively curriculum.

They were to be small enough for teachers to cooperate across the subject barriers, and their mix of specialist secondary and generalist primary teachers should have encouraged this. But here, HMI reports narrow and unimaginative teaching, and little planned integration over subject barriers (apart from integrated humanities).

The predictable problems of liaison, particularly with the upper schools which have to take students very near to those exam pressures and choices, have clearly not been solved. Indeed, they have got worse as parental choice has widened. The one area where the

middle schools do appear to shine is in their general calm, happy and productive atmosphere and their good relationships between teachers and pupils.

It would be wrong to condemn the upper end of the middle schools (where most of the important criticisms come) out of hand, without a comparison with what happens in the first two years of secondary schooling. We have very little good evidence. HMI's own secondary survey concentrated on 14 to 16-year-olds.

But HMI's judgments about the cost of providing a good spread of specialist teaching and resources in schools with fewer than four forms of entry are hard to argue with. Where middle schools have been poor relations of secondaries in terms of resources, accommodation, and teaching ratios, there will be no fairy godmothers magically to bring them up to scratch.

There is enough positive evidence in this report to show that large middle schools are capable of doing a good job. But when their rolls are dwindling, it does seem that resources would be better and more economically used in a straight-forward two-tier system.

no comment

"A Basic Course on Child Abuse: The course is designed for workers who have little experience of child abuse or who are new to Bradford and need to acquaint themselves with local procedures."

From the Bradford Educational Directorate's Newsletter to schools, December 2.

Home candidates and entrants to British universities through UCCA

Year	Total 18-year age group 000s	Total home candidates 000s	Total home entrants 000s	Candidates from overseas 18-19 000s	Candidates from overseas 20-21 000s	Entrants from overseas 18-19 000s	Entrants from overseas 20-21 000s
1982	749	(62)	(25)	31*	14*	16*	8.8
1989	741	107	58	59	31	31.4	16.6
1975	890	116	88	88	29	40	16.4
1970	875	142	71	88	34	48.2	17.1
1962	939	161	72.8	113	92	63.6	12.7

(*) Estimated using UCCA estimates

Estimated using Robbins data for 1961

UCCA figures have been adjusted slightly to express consistency of social classification and consistency of definition of home candidates over the period.

where, shown little correlation with the numerical size of their age group.

On the other hand, the fact that the dominant escalation of the participation of professional class children from 1955-70 was reflected in a similar relative increase among working class children, shows that once the chosen few have been led to join their more numerous companions from the upper classes in the stage immediately preceding entrance, their relative valuation of it follows the same trends.

After 1970, the rate of increase of demand from the children of Class I decelerated as their age participation rate reached the logistic saturation limit. However, the numerical demand continued to increase at from 4-5 per cent per annum as the class itself continued to expand at an even faster rate than that of the previous century.

Parallel behaviour (with probably even some continuing increase in APR) was shown by the academic professions and managerial

classes included in class 2 (class B, OECD). On the other hand the working class entry also resumed the pattern of trends prior to 1955 and demand flattened out and has remained constant to this day.

These phenomena are all illustrated in the table.

It will be noted that since 1979 a new factor has entered with deliberate government restrictions on university entry for the first time for many decades (probably for a century). While working class demand remains constant, the absolute number of entrants has commenced the sharp decline forecast elsewhere, as they are squeezed out by the continuously exponentially expanding (and better qualified) demand from the professional and managerial classes.

Nevertheless, although entrants from the lower classes maintain their absolute numbers, their relative importance is declining, and this is a public sector (as it always has at times,

of glut) and produce the same sharpening of social apartheid there. These effects are likely to reduce working class participation in higher education to about half of its absolute numerical value of the early 1970s within the lifetime of this Parliament.

As might be expected these ratios and relative patterns of behaviour are hardly likely to have been affected in the initial decades of comprehensive reorganization of secondary education, but with the constantly accelerating numbers of educationally pre-conditioned children of the professional classes, most have continued to have a dominant claim on the inevitably more slowly expanding teaching resources available for preparation for higher education.

On the other hand, reversion to a selective system would probably have the same effect as increased selectivity caused by the stop in the expansion of the universities - that is, to reduce within the present absolute numerical level the participation of working class entrants.

The question of realizing any more significant proportion of the latent "reserves of ability" among the children of the majority of the population is, of course, much more profound than simply that of educational reform. It can hardly be conceived without the social and economic changes necessary to give their perception of the feasibility and significance of higher education a much greater socio-cultural reality.

E G Edwards
Professor Edwards was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bradford, 1966-1978.

ACSET asks for A level not degree

Student teachers aiming at secondary schools should not be required to take a degree in their second subject, the teachers' training group on the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers recommended this week.

The recommendation that an A level is sufficient in the second subject runs to some extent contrary to the spirit of dedicated professionalism sought by Sir Keith Joseph who is keen to see teachers with a degree in the subject they teach.

But teacher training institutions have pointed out to ACSET that many applicants for postgraduate certificate of education courses are honours graduates in only one subject. Even those with a subsidiary subject in their degree often find difficulty in matching it with the restricted range of subjects in which an institution offers method training.

"We therefore recommend that the normal minimum requirement for both PGCE and BED should be at least an appropriate A level," advises the draft to be put before the full ACSET committee.

Even the requirement of an A level is waived in some cases, such as where the subject has no obvious A level base or where practical proficiency such as in music or games can be seen to be of equal importance.

TVEI gets confidence vote

The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative was given a vote of confidence this week when it was announced that a further 68 local authorities have bid for the second batch of 107 projects which will receive £100m of funding.

This means that 80 per cent of I.E.s have been won over to the Manpower Services Commission's controversial scheme. Though Labour authorities, particularly on Merseyside, remain the chief opponents, some of them, such as those on the North East, where every I.E.s has declared an interest, have put aside their objections.

The work of sorting the applications to see which meet the scheme's tight criteria has already begun, but it will not become clear until late January or early February how many are likely to have a share of the £100m, which will be spread out over two years. The position is complicated by the fact that talks are still in progress over whether Scotland should join in. If so, some money will have to be set aside from the total available.

Different venue

The first national study conference of the National Association for Pastoral Care in Education will be held at the Hailam Tower Hotel, Sheffield from December 28-30, not at Sheffield Polytechnic, as originally announced.

DES fails to live up to its name, says don

by Bert Lodge

The Department of Education and Science contains not much education and certainly no science, the Association of University Teachers was told at its winter conference at Hull University yesterday.

In his presidential address, Dr William Stephenson, a lecturer in mathematics at London University, said financial expedience had replaced long-term - or indeed any - educational planning. The real decisions were now made by the Treasury.

He also condemned the University Grants Committee for its "supine acquiescence" in Government

assumptions about higher education and expressed no confidence in its chairman, Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer.

The "ill-fated and thoughtless" policy on overseas students' fees, when a dramatic increase has turned away many students and caused serious damage to foreign trade, confirmed the absence of planning, Dr Stephenson said. "It is an excellent example of the Stephen Waldorf approach to higher education policy-making. Shoot first and ask questions afterwards."

"What could be more grotesque than the situation of those universities such as Hull, where we are today, who

were fined last year for taking too many students and who this year are now assiduously being urged to take in more students?"

"Does it make sense to pay young people to go on the dole rather than give them grants to go to university?" Dr Stephenson reminded delegates that the AUT had asked its members not to answer the recent 28 questions from the University Grants Committee on the future of higher education in the form they were set. Instead members should raise the real issues.

But he did not entertain much hope their answers would get to the right

place. "As a member of London University I have some first-hand experience of Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer at work. I am afraid I have little faith that he will filter the multitude of views he will soon be receiving accurately to the Government. I am not even sure he sees that as his role."

The supine acquiescence of the UGC to DES assumptions showed the extent to which it had become an arm of Government. He doubted whether it could survive much longer in its present form. "It does not have the resources but most of all it does not have the confidence of the universities or even the Government."

Whitehall takes merciless line on local spending

by Biddy Passmore

The Government has set its face firmly against any softening of the grant penalties for councils who overspend next year. And its rate limitation Bill, which will be published next week, will follow next year's tough regime with even harsher punishment for selected councils in 1985.

Mr John Lovell, leader of the Tory-controlled Association of County Councils, said authorities would face "an intolerable choice" next year between rate rises far in excess of inflation and major cutbacks in essential services. And the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities predicted rate increases of 25 per cent if services were to stay at their present level.

Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, announced on Wednesday that he was going ahead with the penalty scheme he announced in draft form at the end of October. "This starts to bite as soon as councils exceed their ministers' spending targets. For the first 1 per cent of overspending, councils will lose grant equal to 1 p rate; for the second 1 per cent, the penalty will be a product of a 4 p rate, for the third percentage point to 8 p and 9 p for each point thereafter.

When the draft penalties were announced, ministers were instantly

bombarded with complaints from the local authorities. The loyal and frugal county councils felt particularly aggrieved. But attempts by Mr Jenkin to persuade his Treasury colleagues that the penalties should be softened at the lower end of the scale fell on stony ground.

Mr Jenkin announced on Wednesday a total Rate Support Grant for next year of some £11.9 billion, which is planned to cover 52 per cent of councils' spending. The grant total is only £90m more (in cash) than in the current year.

Ministers' plans for education spending were announced last month and set out in *The TES* on November 25. They involve a 4 per cent cash increase in the planned education budget. Ministers say this will mean a real cut of only 1/2 per cent but the actual cut will be greater than that because of council overspending in the current year.

Mr Ollie Radice, Labour's education spokesman, described the announcement as "a bleak Christmas message to Britain's teachers, parents and pupils."

"With this kind of support, most local education authorities will find it increasingly difficult to preserve an adequate education service," he said.



Coverage should stem from lessons on the use of physics

'Political' ban circumvented

by Nick Wood

The new Secondary Examinations Council has found what seems to be a neat way round Sir Keith Joseph's "test ban" on physics questions dealing with the political aspects of the subject, such as the controversies surrounding nuclear power.

The council concurs with the exam boards' view that exams should probe a candidate's understanding of the social and economic aspects of the subject. Coverage of such topics should stem from lessons on the uses of physics, the council says.

But it also recognizes the force of the Education Secretary's objection to their unrestricted inclusion in the criteria would give the boards carte blanche to set questions that could have been taken straight from a sociology paper.

It recommends that the criterion be amended to make it impermissible for the boards to set questions that can be answered without knowledge of physics, and supports Sir Keith against the boards in his insistence that a practical exam should be a compulsory part of physics exams.

On history, another subject to provoke controversy after Sir Keith said that one of its aims should be to give children an understanding of the "shared values" that underpin British society, the council is less categorical. It recommends that this objective can be met by ensuring that every board, as at present, offers at least one syllabus on the intellectual, cultural, technological and political growth of the United Kingdom.

Second opinion

Alien world for the workers

Philip Venning (*TES* November 25) finds a mystery in the declining proportions of working class entrants to universities, because, like DES projections (which always get it wrong), he assumes that demand goes up or down with the size of the age group. I have shown elsewhere that this is only likely to be the case in those classes if the population where the feasibility of university education, and the kind of life style associated with it, is perceived early enough in commencing the long and tedious preparation for entry before it is too late.

This comes naturally to children of the professional and managerial classes, surrounded from earliest years by evidence of the vital importance of education. For them it is no more than keeping up with father. For the working class child on the other hand, the university is an alien world until far too late. This has little to do with "reserves of ability" but simply reflects the psychological fact that one does not usually value that which one does not

perceive as a reasonably likely possible future.

The main driving force for the steady exponential expansion of the demand for university education for a century before 1955 at a rate of about 2.5 per cent per annum (far exceeding any average demographic effect) was the exactly parallel rise of the professional and managerial classes as a proportion of the population, occasioned mainly by steady social migration and only to a very minor extent by birth rate factors.

The sudden escalation in demand from 1955 to 1970, not only in Britain, but all over Europe, and indeed the advanced world, was mainly due to an equally sudden and exactly parallel increase in the participation rate in higher education from the same educated classes. In the case of class I (or OECD class A) it rose from about 25 per cent prior to 1955 to over 80 per cent after 1970.

This was not due to any increased ease of access or indeed to any increase in the already high perception of feasibility of entrance but to a sharp increase in the valuation of higher education (as compared with alternative strategies of status conservation) among the same social groups. They were probably right in the coming age of the information revolution.

The working class entrance to higher education has always followed a somewhat different course. Far from arising naturally from their normal socio-cultural environment it has depended much more on patronage from well meaning "intellectuals" (especially teachers now) from outside. It has therefore, as I have explained else-



John Lovell

Patrick Jenkin

Firm may lodge YTS losses claim

Continued from page 1

contracts were signed for a scheme under which YTR undertook to provide 360 places in the Aldershot area. With only 128 of the places filled, the MSC signed contracts with him on October 1 for a further scheme for 80 places in the Winchester district.

Four days later Hampshire County Council officials met Mr Westbrook to press him for payment of around £70,000 then claimed as owing in fees to two colleges to which he had sent trainees.

As a result of the meeting, YTR paid off the bulk of the outstanding fees in two instalments. MSC officials were present at the meeting, and soon afterwards sent an accounts team into YTR. On November 26 they closed down the two YTS schemes - the second had only 17 of its places filled and handed over the trainees to Farn-

borough College and a local group training association.

The MSC had for some time had reservations about Mr Westbrook's marketing approach.

But an MSC spokesman said this week: "It was only after the second week that we signed that we started to get warning bells about YTR's financial situation."

Mr Westbrook told *The TES* on Tuesday that YTR was continuing to trade and that the financial difficulties were not as serious as the MSC would disappear if the money it had spent providing places which had not been filled. "Managing agents all over the country have been led into taking on financial commitments by the MSC's over-optimistic assurances. They did not tell us that their own internal planning profiles showed that they expected the trainees to build up much

more slowly."

He was taking legal advice to see whether he could bring an action for damages against the Commission, but he hoped that the Commission would make it unnecessary by coming to the help of all the managing agents who had lost money and making some offsetting payment to them.

Mr Ian Johnson, Mr Westbrook's solicitor, said the matter was being considered by counsel. He would not say whether it was a question of suing for breach of contract.

Meanwhile, Hampshire county officials said this week that if YTR was still trading then they would consider taking legal action to recover more than £19,000 which they say is still owing from last year. They said that they had not yet worked out the further sums which YTR had incurred in college fees for this year's trainees.

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Time for a professional step

There are new moves about a General Teaching Council. The Weaver Report, compromised in the concept, divided individual tasks, and resulted in disagreement. Five years ago, the school-teaching unions tried again to count chairs round an imaginary half-table, and failed. More recently, CATEC (Campaign for the Teaching Council) might have brought them together again had the signals from the DES still been propitious; but to say the least, they were not. So why try again now?

The circumstances of the mid-1980s have gone. A GTC with powers of entry to the profession might at that time have had down conditions too stringent for Government to accept if it was to increase teacher supply; so an essential part of a professional council's work was channelled into ACSET, an advisory council more close to the DES and *force majeure*. Nowadays, it is the Secretary of State who can look back in anger and look forward to firmer criteria for entry and initial training. ACSET is likely to have spawned a National Accreditation Council for initial training, before coming in the major issue of action on INSET. If local professional committees have been inadequate for the former, they will be shown to be even less adequate for the latter. So there is bound to be a move to a funded planning agency for professional training as a whole, rather than national committees for each part of training.

ACSET itself, in which are vested functions which could be central to a General Teaching Council, has only a couple of years to run before review. Meanwhile, it has very recently

John Sayer argues that there is a strong case for a General Teaching Council in present circumstances

achieved the impossible: it now has all the interested parties round the table. For all those reasons, there is a very strong case now to work towards a General Teaching Council not only on the expensively limited brief of the Weaver Report, but through the channels for accreditation and training the profession.

This would have the added advantage of making us ask what we mean by the profession. What are the teachers, anyway? In the Weaver proposals, the teachers were those actually employed in schools and represented by unions negotiating primary and secondary school salaries. What of those qualified teachers who have become the professional servants of local authority departments, or the professional arm of the DES? What of teachers in higher and further education? What of specialized education services, researchers, and teacher-trainers? In ACSET, at least it is clear that professional concerns are those of a whole education service.

By no stretch of the imagination can the profession of educators be limited to those of us who teach in schools, only more than a General Medical Council be confined to doctors in general practice. There are, of course, func-



tions of a General Council which are the prime concern of schoolteachers and for those functions the weight of concern should be reflected in committees and working groups.

The point is, then, that we have to establish what a fully fledged General Council would be for and what it should do, before asking what should be its composition for its various tasks. Unless it encompasses the full range of professional control, it cannot reflect adequately a self-regulating profession. That control will be all the more important in the next few years, when much of the access to information which has previously been confined to homes, through a variety of media and the development of informatics. Who is to control all that? If the teaching profession remains rooted in schools while much of the work of schools is re-ruled, what is to happen to quality control and the professional ethic?

A few years ago, the professional associations of the Nordic group of countries set down six criteria for what

they considered to be a profession. A profession is identified when it performs an essential social service; has a high degree of autonomy in fulfilling the objectives formed for that service by the community; is founded upon a systematic body of knowledge and research, and in such a way that an essential part is common to the whole profession; requires a lengthy period of academic and practical training; has a code of professional ethics; and generates in-service growth and development.

That is more or less in accord with definitions offered by other professions in this country. It illustrates why we should see more prospect for a full professional council born of partnership in teacher-education and training than one confined to the representatives of those who work in schools. Without a view of an education service as a whole, teachers will always run the risk of being regarded as semi-professional, and those who operate from a base outside schools as being a different breed of "educationalists", no longer bound by the same professional ethic.

We may look to the lead of Scotland, but in doing so we should also ask what would be done there if the Scots had the chance to start again. Their GTC is still somewhat limited. Perhaps we should also look at other national services, in particular the National Health Service. While we have been pottering with specific funding for DES priority training areas, or with accreditation now that initial training is no longer the priority which it once was, the NHS has gone ahead with a full-blown training authority. A single self-standing health authority for all aspects of training has been created, taking over the £5m budgets for training formerly managed by the DHSS and coordinating all the national staff groups or specified functions. It is a national development agency to promote a coherent pattern of local, regional, and national training of all kinds. It also promotes research. This special health authority is the result of a review group set up by the Secretary of State, with a membership "representing the broad organizational framework for central arrangements for training, recruitment and staff development in the NHS".

Is that what ACSET should be?

It is that what ACSET should be, if the DES could let it grow into a part of a General Council for the Education Service? Could it take NFER with it? Above all, could half a million teachers then be seen as the major component of a full profession?

John Sayer is principal of Bambury School.

NEWS

Archdeacon challenges health experts

'Talk about grief' advice attacked

by Nick Wood

The suggestion that teachers should encourage children grieving over the death of a loved one to talk about their feelings has been attacked by a leading Anglican clergyman.

"I don't think that the experience of loss is open to calm disposal by a neat programme of counselling," the Reverend Richard Hawkins, Archdeacon of Totnes, Devon says in the latest issue of the magazine, *Education and Health*.

"There may be children who, quite naturally and helpfully to them, do not want to talk about it, particularly at first. They are too busy sorting it out in their own minds."

"To have so external pressure to talk about death when they are confused themselves won't necessarily help them a bit. They may feel that

they are constantly pursued to talk about it, and this is just another pressure to cope with," the Archdeacon explains.

His comments are in reply to a call by two health educators, Beryl Peacey and Sue Foster, for teachers to take active steps to help children who have suffered a bereavement.

A six-point crisis management programme should include the teacher "promoting discussion - with positive explanation of the loss. Fears can be discussed openly and disposed of calmly," they say.

The Archdeacon, however, seems to have the support of parents. An accompanying survey reports that most parents do not think that death is a suitable subject for the classroom.

Overseas student numbers drop sharply, says DES

by Diane Spencer

Latest figures from the Department of Education and Science for further education colleges and polytechnics show a dramatic decline in the number of overseas students.

Numbers fell by 20 per cent in 1982; they are now at the 1972 level of 21,000.

The statistics also show that the number of students on full-time and sandwich courses increased last year, but part-time enrolments declined. Full-time numbers increased by 8 per cent to 573,000 in 1982 for advanced and non-advanced courses. Enrolments by part-time day release students on non-advanced courses fell from 351,000 in 1981 to 313,000 in 1982.

Statistical Bulletin: Statistics of further education students in England 1982-83, November 1983. DES, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1.

Standards suffer as falling rolls force up costs in middle schools

by Virginia Makins

Fewer than half of the 9 to 13 middle schools in a survey by HM Inspectorate were reaching generally satisfactory standards in most parts of the curriculum, and only 5 out of 48 schools achieved good standards.

"Overall work at an appropriate level of ability was given to the substantial number of children in about two-fifths of the schools... In only one out of five schools were children of above average ability given suitably challenging tasks", says the report.

In general, the HMI report offers little comfort to supporters of 9 to 13 middle schools. It concludes that if middle schools are to perform, age for age, as well as primaries and secondaries are expected to perform, they will become increasingly expensive when rolls are falling.

"It may be that this is a price worth paying for a form of schooling that emerged from careful consideration of the educational needs of children in this age range", says HMI. "But... the relatively higher cost of middle schools sharply decreasing in size will have consequences elsewhere in the system."

Standards of work in schools with more than 360 pupils were higher than in smaller schools, and schools with four forms of entry were generally best of all. Small schools could only provide the required range of specialist teaching with staffing ratios considerably better than the average 20:1.

"Where rolls are falling, the choice said seem to be between staffing disproportionately those 9-13 middle schools with less than three forms of entry, or closing or amalgamating them to form larger schools," the report says.

Schools which introduced specialist teaching earlier than most - in the second year rather than the third - also achieved higher standards. This finding has important implications for primary schools, says HMI.

Good resources were also linked with higher standards. Resources were found to be good in 10 schools, and adequate in two-thirds. Dynamic heads made a significant difference to standards - and usually secured good resources.

HMI studied 48 schools, chosen to represent a variety but not making a statistically representative sample. Teams of between 10 and 13 inspectors spent the equivalent of a week in each school. The visits were made in 1979-80.

About half the schools reached satisfactory standards in French, art, craft, design and technology, music, and physical education. The schools did rather better in science, mathematics and English. In maths, three-fifths reached satisfactory standards and 10 schools were good or very good. In English, two-thirds were satisfactory and one sixth good.

The schools covered much the same range of subjects - but not always with

specialist teachers available. Three schools had no maths specialist, one English specialist, three no geographers, seven no music specialists, and three no modern languages specialists. Fourteen were without an RE specialist, and only 26 had specialists in craft, design and technology.

Many of the criticisms made in the middle schools report echo those in previous HMI surveys of primary schools, secondary schools and published school reports. In English and maths the work was often narrowly conceived. Comprehension, grammar and spelling formed a considerable part of English, as did computation of whole numbers and fractions in mathematics.

Only four schools paid much attention to creative mathematics, with investigations, and problem-solving. Only half regarded practical activity as important in the subject. There was little sign of planned use of maths across the curriculum and maths and science were rarely linked.

In French, only a third of teachers regularly used the language in the classroom, background studies about the country did not play an important part, and repetitive exercises did not encourage children to talk and write independently.

In general, students spent too much time listening and writing. HMI considers that all pupils, but especially the older ones, needed more diversity in approaches to teaching and learning. Most of the work was planned with average pupils in mind, and able pupils often got a poor deal.

Although the schools taught "a wide range of basic competences", children were not seen to be finding their own solutions to problems, pursuing their own enquiries, or making choices.

HMI calls for more democratic work, such as the interpretation of evidence in history and geography, and the exploration of patterns in

mathematics. There should be more differentiation between different abilities, and between different years. As in many primary schools, HMI found that curriculum guidelines were often too sketchy to be helpful, and assessment techniques were not used to diagnose weaknesses and try to remedy them. Teachers did not make enough use of published materials, or advisers and colleagues in other schools, when devising guidelines.

One problem was that teachers with special curriculum responsibilities often had to cover too many subjects, or organizational responsibilities, on top of heavy teaching loads, and had little time for planning and curriculum development. On average, teachers with special responsibilities had only three hours a week of non-teaching time.

Just over half the schools in the survey transferred pupils to four or more upper schools, so detailed liaison over curriculum was difficult. There was discussion between middle and upper schools, especially for French, maths, science and English. But there was considerable variation between middle schools in the topics they taught.

HMI recommended much stronger dovetailing of approaches in particular subjects between the middle schools in an authority, and where they co-exist in a dual system with secondaries, with other schools teaching 11 to 13s. Contacts with first schools tended to be limited to maths, reading, and the special problems of individual children.

Disciplinary behaviour and relationships in the schools were found to be very good, and pastoral care was good or very good in three quarters of the schools. But in some schools care and concern for pupils in difficulties was not backed by sufficiently expert teaching; remedial work could be narrow, and deprive children of enriching work in other subjects.

Two-thirds of the schools had generally suitable accommodation for most

subjects. Very few had a drama room or studio. Less than two thirds had satisfactory facilities for class music teaching, only half had good space for art, a third of the science areas were too small or lacked main services, and only half the schools had satisfactory changing arrangements for boys and girls.

Only half had on-call staff to work in libraries, and half had laboratory technicians. Libraries often lacked books suitable both for the ablest and the least able children.

Many of the problems outlined in the report are not confined to middle schools, says HMI. The findings about relationships between size of school, subject teaching, and higher standards of work raise questions about the provision of effective and efficient education for 9 to 13-year-olds that go beyond the issue of middle schools.

But even in the higher-spending 1980s, the middle school idea made heavy demands on human and material resources. With falling rolls and financial constraints, the difficulties are exacerbated.

The deficiencies found in the report are not all confined to middle schools, says HMI. But some, such as deficiencies in specialist accommodation, too much teaching aimed at the average, and the lack of specialist teachers in some subjects even for the oldest pupils, are at least partly due to the high cost of meeting the need for both specialist and generalist teachers.

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Middle school pupils... 'too much listening and writing'

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NUT decries rival unions' attempt to woo primary staff

by Richard Garner

A new recruitment war has broken out between teachers' unions with the National Union of Teachers accusing its rivals of "carpetbaggering" by attempting to woo primary school teachers to their ranks.

In a leaflet designed for school noticeboards the NUT claims organisations which have concentrated on the secondary sector in the past have now turned their attention to primary teachers.

It calls them "the carpetbaggers" and says they have "cynically decided to recruit in primary schools simply because falling rolls in the secondary sector will make it more difficult for them to retain their membership".

"Primary school teachers will recognise such opportunistic approaches for what they are," it continues. "Only the NUT has consistently worked to the interests of all teachers, women and men equally, in all types of schools and in every sector of the education service."

The leaflet also lists the union's priorities for 1984 - the first of which is to protect teachers' jobs - and reveals "exclusive new benefits" which are available for NUT members next year. These include weekends away with the Ladbroke Hotels and car maintenance at Auto Safety centres.

Mr Peter Smith, deputy general secretary of the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association, said: "If we're carpetbaggers, we've been carpetbaggers since 1978 - when we decided to open our doors to primary school teachers."

"There is no new campaign as far as we are concerned. We are recruiting in secondary and primary schools on your educational policies."

He said of the exclusive benefits offered to NUT members next year: "It all sounds very exciting but - in the same way as I buy a newspaper to read the news and not to play bingo - I would join a teachers' organization for its stand on policies rather than fringe benefits."

Mr Gerry Lee, president of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers, said: "I would say they are obviously not talking about us because we have always recruited not only in the primary sector but also looked after the interests of those in further and higher education."

"I sympathize with the NUT who no doubt have problems with falling membership. We, fortunately, are not in that position."

Views on assisted places changing

by Nick Wood

Heads of primary and middle schools are taking a much more cooperative line towards the Government's controversial Assisted Places Scheme, which subsidizes the cost of a private education for bright children from poor families.

Three in five heads from state primary and middle schools now help parents to apply for the scholarships, compared with just one in four last year, the latest survey from the committee monitoring the scheme says. Only one head in 17 is "unhelpful".

A similar, though less dramatic, shift in attitude has also occurred among state school heads over the transfer of pupils at sixth-form level. Two in five smooth the path for those applying for scholarships, up from three in ten last year.

The figures are taken from a questionnaire sent to the heads of the 231 independent schools in the scheme. They were asked to rate the attitude of their malnourished sector counterparts under one of three headings - helpful, neutral and unhelpful. A total of 190 completed this section.

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, which represents 17,000 of the country's 22,000 primary heads, agreed there had been a shift in

When the scheme was launched in 1961, heads of primary and middle schools had been reluctant to supply written reports on pupils that the independent sector wanted as a basis for selection. They feared it would prove damaging to state secondary schools because it would create off the bright children. At the same time, they recognized they had a duty to respect the aspirations of the children and parents, Mr Hart said.

"Clearly, what has happened is that more and more heads have come to the conclusion that their first loyalty is to their children and the parents."

"They feel duty-bound to provide some sort of report to assist independent schools in making selections. If that is construed as 'helpful', so be it. It would account for the switch."

"Although heads don't like the scheme any more, that's a lesser consideration than their obligation to their children and parents."

Growing acceptance of the scheme in the malnourished sector is reflected in the increase in the number of children winning places. A total of 4,982 pupils took up subsidized places at 231 independent schools this September, up by over 300 on the 4,666 last year - a rise of nearly 7 per cent.

Of these, 4,201 were aged 11-13 (a

5 per cent increase) while sixth-form places jumped by 18 per cent from 662 in 1982 to 781 this year.

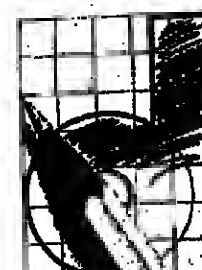
To all, some 14,000 children are now being helped by the scheme, which was launched in 1981.

Nevertheless, the scheme is under subscribed. One in 10 places at the lower level goes begging, a figure that rises to nearly one in four among sixth-formers.

A shortage of academically qualified candidates from malnourished schools is held to be the main reason for the shortfall among the 11-13 age group. The scheme's popularity at sixth-form level has yet to feel the full effects of the Government's decision, earlier this year, to scrap the i.e.s. power of veto over transfers at this stage.

The results of the survey indicate that the scheme is helping the poorest sections of society. Two in five children came from families with annual incomes below £5,616 and qualified for a full rebate of their fees from the Government. Two-thirds of this year's crop of entrants came from families earning less than £8,000 per annum.

Children from one-parent families and those hit by unemployment are the largest group to benefit from the scheme. Not so far behind are those whose fathers are clergymen. Of this year's intake, 87 come from families in this category.



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PROGRAMME OF COURSES & SEMINARS January — April

January
16-18. Video Production — Stage I. Director: Graham Paterson. £380 + VAT.
19-20. Video Editing. Director: Ray Clear. £210 + VAT.

February
20-21. Education and the New Technologies — a seminar for educational administrators and managers. "The Microcomputer and its Educational Implications". Directors: Adrian Oldknow/Stanley Bradford. £120 + VAT.

22-24. Video Production — Stage I. Director: Tony Ball. £380 + VAT.

March
19-23. Video Production — Stage II. Director: Graham Paterson. £600 + VAT.

April
2-3. Video Editing. Director Ray Clear. £210 + VAT.

4-6. Video Production — Stage I. Director: Stephen Miller. £380 + VAT.
7-8. Education and the New Technologies Seminar "The Microcomputer and its Educational Implications". Directors: Adrian Oldknow/Stanley Bradford. £120 + VAT.

(All dates inclusive). (All fees inclusive of course, full board and accommodation).

Further courses and seminars will be held from May onwards. These will include, in addition to further courses and seminars in the above subjects, Video Production Stage III course, a concentrated 3 week Diploma in Television Techniques course and 4 day courses in Slide-Tape Production and Audio-Visual Techniques.

NEWS

Life gets better for those with jobs

by Philip Venning

A view of the nation where life for millions of children and young people is getting better but for a growing minority affected by unemployment is getting worse, emerges from the latest issue of *Social Trends*, the Government's annual look at how the country is changing.

As usual, the volume of figures and charts points at opposing trends among young people - involvement in youth organisations is continuing to grow but the number of teenage drug addicts receiving treatment is rising again. Teenage pregnancies have declined but crime among teenage girls has increased.

Unemployment features as a factor in an increasing number of the tables and diagrams. It is revealed, for example, that only 14 per cent of the unemployed had taken or thought about taking any educational or training course. Only 2 per cent of former manual workers had done so.

The young unemployed were more inclined than older people on the whole to sleep late and go into town. Gener-

ally they were the least likely of any group, in work or out of it, to take part in voluntary work. By contrast, 38 per cent of female students had been involved in some voluntary activities.

By 1981, one in six of all school age children were in families where the head of the household was either unemployed or unable to work (a student or pensioner, for example). In that year, 82 per cent of unemployed men with dependent children had an income at or below supplementary benefit level, 14 per cent received up to 40 per cent more, and 4 per cent above.

Though the number of families where at least one member was unemployed doubled in the past six years, the proportion with school-age children declined. Nevertheless, those families where the breadwinner was out of work were more likely to be large ones, with at least three children.

This correlates with high unemployment among the lower socio-economic groups, which on average tend to have the largest families. About 7 per cent

of the unemployed were single parents.

People are generally spending more of their income on housing and heating, and less on food, a trend that is particularly true for low income families with children.

Households with children are more likely than those without to own the full range of consumer hardware, from freezers to washing machines. Indeed, few children are now in families without a colour television, washing machine, refrigerator and vacuum cleaner. There are no figures, however, on videos and home computers.

In the past 10 years the proportion of households, with children, which own a telephone has risen from half to over three-quarters. And children are far more likely to go home to a centrally-heated flat or house than in 1973.

There are no marked differences in the way that large and small families divide their budget on different items. One-parent families spend a slightly smaller proportion on meat than do those with two adults, slightly more on

vegetables and bread.

Six out of 10 couples who divorced in 1981 had children under 16, affecting a total of 169,000 children, a quarter of whom were under five.

Pregnancies among girls under 16 were down to 8,967 by 1979 from a high point of 9,739 in 1973 - the majority of which ended in abortion. The proportion of both boys and girls aged 16 to 19 who were non-smokers rose over the past 10 years, but the number of young people being treated as drug addicts has climbed back towards levels reached in 1971 (though this is not necessarily a reliable guide).

Social Trends also reveals that: 3.3 per cent of all letters posted in Britain came from educational or official establishments;

89 per cent of households own a dictionary, compared with 84 per cent who own a Bible and 83 per cent a paperback. One in 14 working-class families have no books at all;

membership of education trade unions declined by 8 per cent from 1979 to 1981 - this was less than the fall

in manufacturing, engineering and construction;

the number of young people consulting counselling and advisory services rose from 10,000 in 1976 to 31,000 in 1982;

the number of staff employed by the Department of Education fell from 3,700 in 1979 to 3,500 in 1983;

average blood lead levels are higher in those under five than in older children;

enrolment by young people in the Scouts, youth clubs, and other organisations has continued to rise;

the proportion of 10 to 13-year-old boys found guilty of, or cautioned for, indictable crimes has fallen in the past five years, but the corresponding proportion of girls is continuing an upward trend;

families that earn between £9,500 and £16,540 a year receive most financial benefit from education, when taxes and Government benefits are added together.

Social Trends 14 1984 HMSO £19.95.

Biddy Passmore reports from a conference discussing the divide between universities and public sector HE

End of the binary line?

What will happen to the binary line between the universities and public sector higher education over the next 20 years? Will it shift, blur or fade away completely?

The North East London Polytechnic had gathered some impressive speakers to give their views at a conference in the Royal Hall last Friday. They did not agree on the answer, but Peter Brooke, Minister for Higher Education, declined to predict what would happen. But he touched on a theme that was to recur many times during the day: that there was already as much diversity within sectors as between them.

Mr Brooke said he welcomed the "fullest and most rigorous dialogue" on what student demand would be, while making it plain that contraction was inevitable. And he called for trans-binary cooperation in order to strengthen the system while it contracted.

The minister was followed by the man often credited with creating the binary system single-handed: Sir Toby Weaver, deputy secretary in the years of Boyce, Crossland and early Thatcher. (As Gerry Fowler, director of NELS, and a former Labour minister said: "Perhaps Toby Weaver couldn't read the mind of ministers but he helped form the mind of ministers.")

Sir Toby described how Robbins was routed; how, while accepting his principle of student access, successive governments had, in fact, undermined his basic plan, which was to create a university near-monopoly.



Peter Brooke: "decided prediction"

If Robbins had been implemented, he said, nearly 90 per cent of higher education would now have been in the universities, under a separate minister of higher education, with only 59,000 places left with local education authorities. As it was, the share of places between universities and the public sector was now 56/44, roughly the same as in 1963.

Sir Toby did not foresee dramatic changes. "If I were to make a prediction," he said, "the binary system would still be flourishing in the year 2000. If I'm wrong, it would be because the universities would have joined the maintained institutions as part of a unitary system under public control."

Asked to define "public control", Sir Toby parried the question with an old mandarin's skill ("the opposite of professional control"). He also quelled a plea from the audience for greater polytechnic freedom. That had happened up to 1976 and "some thought it was not a very good way of running a railroad," he said.

In any case, that would not change the binary system. "All you'd be doing would be moving certain institutions through the green baize door, so to speak."

The line between the two sectors did not seem so clear cut to Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, chairman of the University Grants Committee. He pointed out that it was "a gross oversimplification to describe the universities as self-governing and the polytechnics as the opposite. Government was now a 'fundamentally interfering body', both universities and polytechnics got their money from outside and governments described that money at some stage in its passage as 'our money'."

Teaching styles were different, he conceded, because university teaching was broadly designed for the 18-year-old taking a full-time degree, while a large proportion of polytechnic students were part-time and mature. But institutions should also teach in different ways according to the students' intelligence. "You ought not to teach students with three As at A level in the same way as those with three Cs," he said. Yet there were undoubtedly some universities where the teaching was designed for the students they would like to have rather than the students they actually had.

In research, too, the usual distinction drawn - that universities did pure research while polytechnic research was applied - did not necessarily serve universities well. Not only was pure research now less respected than it was but much of what was discovered would be better left unknown. "There is a need for less accumulation of facts

and more synthesis of them", he said. Sir Peter also saw the future in a different light from Sir Toby. "I shall be extremely surprised if the binary line as we now know and love it survives even to the end of the century," he said. He warned, however, of the danger of academic drift involved in cross-fertilisation and a polytechnic merged, the institution must not succumb to the temptation to abandon sub-degree and part-time work. "It would be jolly silly to merge and then have to create a brand new polytechnic because the new institution was not meeting local needs," he said.

He saw no reason why our higher education system should not develop in the same way as Japan's, where there were national universities, state universities and city universities (depending on their source of funding), as well as private universities "of very great distinction".

But he was against a variety of sources of funding for a single institution, arguing that "the administrative complexities would outweigh the emotional advantages".

All this drawing of analogies and speculation about the future was too abstract for Ray Rickett, director of Middlesex Polytechnic. The differences between the two sectors were real, he said, on validation arrangements, salaries, power to grant degrees, level of physical provision and unit costs - and the greatest damage was done by the different funding levels.

Most polytechnics and large colleges get on extremely well with their own local areas. Dr Rickett said, "None of us would be complaining if the money was different."

He quoted figures from a DES comparison of unit costs in the two sectors which showed that arts in the universities were funded at a higher level than sciences in the public sector. Even allowing for university spending on research, there was still a difference of £500 per student between the two sectors. The North East London Polytechnic was marginalised for being expensive, yet its only crime was to spend the same amount per student as the cheapest universities without a medical school.

Dr Rickett praised the universities for maintaining their spending per student - and, thus, quality - at a time of cuts and bitterly criticized the NAB for deciding to cut spending per student by 11 per cent rather than seeking to bring it up to university levels.

"We must move very fast if we are not going to damage the public sector," he concluded. "It was clearly his view that the spending divide, at least, should end."



Stuart Madure, Editor of *The TES* (centre), and Gabrielle Maliny, winner of the 1983 Super Brain contest organized by MENSAs, present Dr Raymond Oliver, winner of the Brainwave competition, with the Brainwave trophy. Dr Oliver also won £500 for himself and £1,500 for his school, Edgware School, Middlesex. His Brainwave was a "displacement cylinder gauge" for measuring the exact level of liquid displacement. The competition was organized by *The TES* and Hestle Hope, and teachers were asked to submit ideas for aids that would help in the classroom.

Welsh Lit exams threat

by Nick Wood

Ministers are worried that the death of plays written in Welsh may make it difficult to construct a satisfactory exam in the literature of the language.

They have asked the Secondary Examinations Council to investigate whether Welsh translations of the works of non-indigenous dramatists would help to plug the gap.

They are particularly concerned that lack of suitable texts may prevent the exam from stretching children of all abilities.

The comments come from Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, and Mr Nicholas Edwards, the Welsh Secretary, in reply to proposals from the exam boards for new 16-plus exams in three subjects - Welsh (first language), Welsh (second language) and Welsh literature.

The Secretaries of State accept that there is likely to be some difficulty in finding appropriate dramatic texts for use by candidates of a wide range of ability, but they consider that nevertheless dramatic texts should figure as one of the three literary forms for study along with poetry and prose.

They invite the SEC to consider the selective use of literature in translation might help to fill the gap, the boards are told.

The plan to put all youngsters, regardless of ability, through the same package of exams and other forms of assessment such as coursework, also alarms ministers. They question whether such an approach would constitute a fair test for candidates of widely differing abilities.

Noting that the proposals for Welsh language examinations in all three subjects, they have asked the

NAHT refuses to play ball over soccer school plan

by Bert Lodge

One of Britain's headteacher unions has joined the English Schools' Football Association in condemning the proposed national soccer school for the top 10 schoolboy players.

The plan is to billet the boys at Lilleshall, the national sports centre in Shropshire, for two years while they receive special coaching and attend a local comprehensive. The first intake of 25 boys is due to arrive next September.

At its last meeting the executive council of the National Association of Head Teachers agreed with many of the criticisms already made of the scheme (TES, November 18) and resolved to write a letter of support to ESFA.

Mr Arthur de Caux, assistant secretary of the NAHT, said there was general agreement on the council that the plan smacked of the East German approach of getting them young and force-feeding them through to a gold medal.

"We are also worried about what the Football League clubs will do. We see them homing in like vultures on these boys when they are under enough pressure as it is."

Author of the scheme is Mr Bobby Robson, England team manager, and the ESFA claims it is the result of his anxiety for England to do well in future European and World Cup competitions. It pointed out that after England's failure in the 1982 World Cup, Mr Robson was put in charge not only of the team but also of the coaching department of the FA. He produced

his plan for the national school last December. Mr de Caux said it was not the job of his association to advise the FA on why he did not win the World Cup, but like the ESFA, he doubted whether establishing the school would lead to an improved England performance. They also agreed that the experimental nature of the school would lead to young people being used as guinea-pigs.

"Moreover, we doubt the ability of the Football Association or anybody else to select the best boys in the country at such an early age - and whether those selected will develop into the best adult players."

"We are also concerned about how the boys will fit in to the day school for two years and into the life of the community."

One proposal by Mr Robson did meet with NAHT approval - that of establishing centres of excellence round the country for the development of young players. "That seems a better way forward."

This idea is also welcomed by the ESFA, but with reservations. The schoolmasters are resisting the efforts of the Football League to have the centres based on league grounds. They believe they should be in sport and leisure centres or schools.

The Football Association was reported this week to have found a sponsor for the first two years of the Lilleshall school. It is understood to be a £1.2m deal with an international motor manufacturing firm.



Nigel beats golf handicap

Nigel Osborn-Clarke, a pupil since the age of three at Elmfield School for the Deaf, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, has won this year's Glyn Foundation Award.

Nigel, aged 17, took up golf less than five years ago and now has a handicap of five at the Shirehampton Club. This year he has won the PGA Junior Medal and the South-West Winter Championship, and has played for the

Gloucestershire Union Junior, Colts and senior teams and the Avon schools' county teams. He was also chosen as reserve for the English Golf Union and selected for English Golf Union coaching. Presenting the award is Mr Michael Boullock, chairman of the Glyn Foundation for the past 10 years until his appointment last month as secretary of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, St Andrew's.

More pupils demanding damages for PE injuries

Cases involving physical education teachers in litigation more than doubled last year, an investigation by the Physical Education Association has found.

Now the association is urging all PE teachers to take out additional insurance cover in the face of increased claims by pupils for injury caused by the teacher's negligence.

Mr Andrew Petherick, general secretary, said this week that more than 70 cases were reported last year when the annual average used to be 30-plus.

In one case, damages of £420,000 were awarded. In another, a trampoline accident resulting in partial disability had led to an award of £250,000.

Writing in the latest issue of the *British Journal of PE* he warns teachers against assuming they will always be covered by their local authority for legal liability action. "This is generally the case. But where a teacher is in breach of his contract and negligence occurs the local education authority could look to the teacher for a contribution towards the damages incurred."

He blames a heightened awareness among the public of parental rights for the rise in legal cases involving PE teachers.

Burlington Danes

The head of Burlington Danes School, London W12 is Mr Kenneth Pyffe and not Mr Donald Palmer as reported on the sports pages of the December 2 issue of *The TES*. Mr Palmer is deputy head of the Danes site of Burlington Danes.

NEWS



Eric Heffer pledged support for strike

Students skimp on textbooks

Students are now spending on books less than a third of the amount allowed for them in the maintenance grant, according to a major survey published last week.

The survey, sponsored and published by the Publishers' Association and the British Library, found that students were spending an average of £26.50 on books a year, compared with the national amount of £175. Three-quarters of university students said that there were recommended books they would not buy.

Mr John Davies, director of the University, College and Professional Publishers' Council of the Publishers' Association, said the situation was extremely worrying, especially as college libraries were also being cut. Copies of the report are available from The Publishers' Association, 19 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HJ, price £10 inclusive.

Heffer urges ILEA staff to take stand

Employees of the Inner London Education Authority will need to take "extra-parliamentary action" if they are to defeat Government plans to abolish the authority, Mr Eric Heffer, chairman of the Labour Party, said last week.

Speaking at a rally jointly organized by the 14,500-strong Inner London Association of the National Union of Teachers and the National Union of Public Employees, Mr Heffer pledged his support for the one-day strike planned by unions on January 24 over the Government's plans to abolish both the ILEA and the Greater London Council.

He said it was "the sort of extra-parliamentary action required at the

present moment", adding: "It doesn't mean we want to chuck out the Government by force. It means we want to use all the means we can to apply pressure to the parliamentarians and make a stand on behalf of the people. We shall fight them in every possible way."

Mr Richard Rieser, general secretary of the Inner London Teachers' Association, warned that "there may well be need for further action" after the one-day strike. If the legislation to abolish the authorities went ahead there would need to be "united activity in all our schools against it".

"There is only one way to get people out on January 24 and get them to come to the rally we have in Hyde

Park", he added. "That's to get them out on strike."

Meanwhile, in a submission to the Government over its plans to abolish the authorities - and replace the ILEA with a joint board comprised of borough representatives, the Secondary Heads Association says it does not feel the move "would lead to any improvement in the educational services of our capital city."

"London has a high proportion of children disadvantaged for a number of reasons: any authority must bear in mind that these children are more expensive to educate than more fortunate ones and this underlines the need for nursery schools, and support services such as the psychological and

guidance centres," it adds. "Similarly the school meals service is of vital importance to the health of these children."

"We have seen many of these aspects of the education service seriously affected in some of the outer London boroughs and we would fear a similar outcome in Inner London as a result of the Government's proposals."

"We would draw attention to the rich cultural life of London, due in no small part to the provision of adult, further and higher education and to the very full use of London's school buildings outside normal school hours," it concludes. "We think that all this might be diminished by the proposed legislation."

The TES Guide to the YTS

The new Youth Training Scheme officially began operating in April 1983 but despite wide publicity most people in education and industry still have only a hazy idea of how it works.

Who is in the programme and what does it do for them? How does it affect schools and colleges? What is the real significance of the scheme for education, industry and most important of all, the young themselves?

The TES Guide to the YTS attempts to sum up the facts and to set out how the scheme actually works.

The Guide is available in reprint form price 25p including postage within the UK.

Please direct your enquiries to:

Frances Goddard
The Times Supplements
Priory House, St John's Lane
London EC1M 4BX

NEWS

CHRISTMAS NOTICEBOARD

GALLERIES...

The National Gallery
The National Gallery Christmas quiz for children has "Seeing Things" as its theme. It is free from the Orange Street entrance from December 27-January 8 and caters for all ages. Linked to the quiz is a ghost story competition.

Meet the Artist - Holbein a performance for children in which Holbein is portrayed painting "The Ambassadors" and the audience is invited to ask questions. Performances are at 2.30pm on December 28, 29, 30 and January 3, 4, 5 and 6. Admission free, quiz tickets issued 30 minutes before the start of the performance and priced given to 8 to 11-year-olds.

The National Portrait Gallery
The gallery at St Martin's Place, London WC2, has organized art, craft and drama activities for children aged 7 to 14, based on the exhibition, "Portrait Society: Portraits of the English Country Gentleman and his Family," by Arthur Devis, 1712-1787, on January 4, 5 and 6. Oatmeal and tickets from the gallery. Please mark envelope "Loyal Enrolment" and enclose s.d. Phone bookings on 01-930 1552 ext 239.

The Tate Gallery
Looking into Space is the theme of the Tate Gallery's Christmas Trails for children aged 8 to 14, for which eight paintings have been selected to show how artists create an impression of depth. Available daily from December 7-January 8. The Children's Christmas tours on December 28 and 30, and January 3, 4 and 5 will follow the same theme. Meet 11.30am at the Rotunda Christmas tree.

Cecil Higgins Art Gallery
An Allston Wonderland costume competition for children aged 7-13 years from 2.30-4pm on January 3 and 4. Castle Close, Bradford.

MUSEUMS...

British Museum
Turbans and Tulips - a children's trail for the Islamic Art - Design exhibition is available in English and Turkish from the information desk at the front hall, and from the exhibition.

The "Roman Britain" exhibition also has a trail for children available throughout the holidays and special talks will be given in the Roman Britain room at 2.30pm from January 3-6. Films on Roman Britain will be shown at 2.30pm in the lecture theatre. No booking required. Inquiries to the British Museum Education Service, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Tel: 01-636 1555.

Museum of Mankind
Two new exhibitions open on December 16: Himalayan Rainbows: textiles and weaving in Nepal; and Pagan of Islands: the peoples and cultures of Micronesia. The regular chain of more than 2,000 islands in the west Pacific. Details from the museum: Burlington Gardens, London W1.

Handling sessions will also be held during the Christmas period to allow children the chance to touch objects normally only seen in glass cases. The material, from a variety of places but mainly Africa, will include weapons, carvings and musical instruments. 10.30-12.30 December 28-30 and January 3-6.

The Science Museum
The Discovery Room will exhibit a selection of practical experiments and demonstrations for visitors of all ages to explore and investigate. Open from 11.30 to 4.15pm daily, except Sundays, from December 19 to January 7 (closed December 23-25 and January 1).

Horsham Museum
A club for children aged eight and over will be held on December 22, 23, 28, 29, 30 and 31 and January 3-7. Morning session 10.30am-12.30pm, afternoon session 1.30pm-3.30pm. Art and craft activities related to the museum's ethnographical collections will be organized. Admission free, but numbers limited.

On December 17 a family workshop will be held on "Making Bull-Boars", a musical instrument. Minimum age 10. Details from the museum, London Road, Forest Hill, SE23 3PQ. Tel: 01-699 2339.

Natural History Museum
Puppet show performances for 4 to 11-year-olds by the Nulmag Puppet Company. Daily from January 3-18, except January 9, at 11am and 2.30pm on weekdays and 3pm at weekends. Tickets £1, advance booking recommended. Mr A. Liddle, Natural History Museum, South Kensington, SW7 5BD.

Museum of London
"Underground London" - a series of illustrated talks, workshops and walkabouts on archaeology from the earth, discovering Roman and Medieval London. Suitable for all the family (from 10 years upwards). Events at approximately noon, 2.15 and 3pm each day from January 3-7. Programme details from the Museum of London, London Wall, EC2. Tel: 01-600 3699.

OTHER EVENTS...

Battersea Arts Centre
"Movement Schools" are to be held at the centre for 7 to 12-year-olds on December 28, 29, and 30, and for 13 to 20-year-olds on January 4, 5 and 6. Morning sessions consist of dance and gymnastic skills and afternoon sessions in utilizing the skills in creating movement and theatre. £6 for three days. Contact the Arts Centre, Old Town Hall, Lavender Hill, London SW11. 01-223 6768 for bookings and details.

The Barbican Centre
That's Cricket, an assembly by John Huntley of rare archive film of famous cricketers, introduced by Brian Johnston in the Barbican Hall at 3pm on December 29.

Booking details from box office, 01-638 8891.
National Theatre
Five story tellers present folk-tales and fairy stories from Australia (December 21 for 8 to 12-year-olds), South-East Asia (December 22 for 8 to 12-year-olds), India (December 23 for 8 to 12-year-olds), and December 28 for 6 to 12-year-olds; North American Indian stories (January 3 for 7 to 11-year-olds) and the West Indies (January 5 for 7 to 10-year-olds). Each session in the Olivier Stalls Foyer at 11.30am lasts about an hour.

Acrobatics workshops conducted by a qualified gymnastic coach will be held in the Lyttelton Circle Foyer at 11.30am on December 29 for those with no experience; 1.30pm-3.30pm, afternoon session 1.30pm-3.30pm. Art and craft activities related to the museum's ethnographical collections will be organized. Admission free, but numbers limited.

January 4 for those with some experience, and January 6 for the reasonably competent. Tickets for all events free, but limited. Phone 01-633 0880.

LECTURES...

December 19
"Christmas and the Great Western Railway" - an illustrated lecture by Professor A. Atkins at 3pm in the Palmer Building, University of Reading, Whiteknights. The lecture will cover a number of themes connected with children, railways and Christmas. The development of toy trains and model railways will be discussed and the talk will conclude with a showing of films from British Rail, including one about building the Severn Tunnel. Admission free.

December 20
A lecture on "Pulsars" by the Astronomer Royal, Professor G. Smith at the London Planetarium, Marylebone Road, London W1 at 7.30pm. Admission £1.15 adults, 75p under 16s; doors open at 7pm.

December 26
"Man, Snow and Ice" - an illustrated lecture on the life of Arctic peoples by Mr O. Boston, director of the Horniman Museum, at 2.15pm. Doors open at 2pm. Tel: 01-699 1872.

Compiled by Mary Crickshaw

Students hold back rent over fine

by Biddy Passmore

Students at Warwick University have announced that they will pay their college rents next term into a special bank account, not to the university, in protest at the £30,000 fine imposed after a violent demonstration against Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary.

The students have already conducted a three-week boycott of the university's commercial services, which they claim has led to the closure of two bars and the loss of some £15,000 in takings. If the rents threat is carried out - and some 70 per cent of the students say they are willing to take part - it could lose the university a further £350,000.

"Our aim is not really to deprive the university of finance but just to show the strength of support by students on the campus who are outraged by this ludicrous fine," Mr Richard Jones, president of the students' union, said. "How can you be fined for events outside your control?"

But he said he hoped the union would reach agreement with the university authorities over the Christmas period. He said there was no question of the union agreeing to pay a fine but it would certainly be willing to see how similar events could be controlled in the future.

If no agreement is reached, the university will simply deduct the fine from its allocation to pay a fine but the next instalment of which is due to be paid in January; £30,000 would represent nearly one tenth of the union's allocation for the year.

UNITED STATES

Peter David on the outcome of a year-long debate

America's great debate on education culminated with a national summit conference in Indianapolis last week, giving federal officials, teachers and state and local school boards an opportunity to review the impact of a year of intensive discussion about educational reform.

The debate, which started in February when a presidential Commission on Excellence in Education published a stinging attack on educational standards, has produced mixed results. On the positive side, it has galvanized states and districts into a spate of reforms. But it has had depressingly little impact on the amount of money appropriated by Congress for the 1984 education budget.

A survey published last week in the journal *Education Week* suggests that the outpouring of speeches and reports at national level has had a dramatic impact on the thinking of states and school districts, the main providers of education in the United States. In the past 11 months, the survey indicates, 34 state-level commissions have been formed to study educational improvement.

In many cases, issues highlighted in the report by the Commission on Excellence in Education have been taken up by state governors. For example, in California, the state governor has announced a series of reforms that could be made without spending extra money.

The Department of Education has reportedly clashed with the White House over the size of the 1985 education budget. Mr Bell to be believed to be asking for an increase of \$3 billion (22 billion) as a visible demonstration of the Administration's commitment to reform. He is being vigorously opposed by David Stockman, director of the President's budget office.

Some education organizations, notably the National Education Association, are nevertheless confident that Congress will pass a major education spending bill when it reconvenes early next year. The NEA is throwing its weight behind an ambitious American Defense Education Act sponsored by the Democratic presidential contender, Gary Hart of Colorado.

The Bill, designed by the NEA itself, is portrayed as the 1980s equivalent of the legislation that boosted federal spending on education after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957. It



Turkish workers... back from West Germany?

Looking for a homeward lure

TURKEY

Two small new schools will open in Istanbul and Izmir next month. This apparently unremarkable event is significant because the scheme is being financed by the West Berlin Senate, and the teachers will receive training in West Germany.

Catering initially for only a few dozen part-time students, the "apprenticeship schools" aim to give young car mechanics and similar workers sufficient knowledge to start their own businesses.

However, the Germans do not hide the fact that the project is linked to the anticipated return from Germany of many Turkish "guest-workers". Some two million Turks live in the Federal Republic, and the Kohl administration has been seeking ways of encouraging them to return to their country of origin.

The largest concentration of Turks in West Germany is in Berlin, once described as the third largest Turkish city after Istanbul and Ankara.

It is hoped that the two new schools will expand to provide opportunities for the children of the returning workers. The last couple of years has seen an increase in educational cooperation between the two countries, with more and more Turkish teachers going to work in West Germany, the acceptance of Turkish as an official second language in some German schools and talk of establishing a German-language engineering faculty at one of Turkey's leading universities.

Commenting on the case, the official newspaper, *People's Daily*, said that such "feudalist ideas" would cause much trouble in the future, particularly with the state family planning programme which allows couples to have only one child.

Jane Marshall

OVERSEAS

High hopes raise no extra cash

Excellence have dominated the thinking of the local commission. More than 30 states, for example, have begun to consider the controversial recommendation that exemplary teachers should be paid more than their colleagues. At least two states, California and Florida, have already approved schemes that would do so.

Another theme of the national report - that more time be spent on teaching - has been echoed in many areas. Seven states have already increased the amount of time spent on teaching and another 10 are considering lengthening the school day. Sixteen states are deciding whether to lengthen the school year and 10 states are discussing the possibility of increasing instructional time by cutting back extracurricular activities.

Any hopes that the Reagan Administration might be ready to augment these initiatives with substantially increased federal funding were, however, dashed at the Indianapolis conference. The Education Secretary, Mr Terrel Bell, said in the keynote speech that state governors should press first for reforms that could be made without spending extra money.

The Department of Education has reportedly clashed with the White House over the size of the 1985 education budget. Mr Bell to be believed to be asking for an increase of \$3 billion (22 billion) as a visible demonstration of the Administration's commitment to reform. He is being vigorously opposed by David Stockman, director of the President's budget office.

Acknowledging criticisms that the Administration's response to the new education debate has consisted largely of rhetoric so far, Mr Bell hinted that President Reagan's State of the Union message in January might contain news about new federal initiatives and spending.

State governments are not expecting a federal bonanza, however. Many were disappointed that, despite all the excitement about education this year, Congress ended its legislative calendar recently without acting on any of the parade of bills which proposed big increases in education spending.

The biggest disappointment was a decision by the Republican leadership in the Senate to block, for the time being, a Bill that would have pumped an extra \$1 billion over the next two years into new programmes to improve curricula and teacher training in maths and science. The House of Representatives had passed the Bill by an overwhelming vote (348 to 54) in March.

Some education organizations, notably the National Education Association, are nevertheless confident that Congress will pass a major education spending bill when it reconvenes early next year. The NEA is throwing its weight behind an ambitious American Defense Education Act sponsored by the Democratic presidential contender, Gary Hart of Colorado.

The Bill, designed by the NEA itself, is portrayed as the 1980s equivalent of the legislation that boosted federal spending on education after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik in 1957. It

calls for an enormous programme of federal grants for both schools and colleges.

Under the scheme, elementary and secondary spending would be augmented by \$2 billion in the first year and \$4 billion in later years. An extra \$25m would be spent on higher education in the first year, with similar increases in subsequent years covered by the legislation.

The huge scale of the proposed spending increases ensure that the Bill will face powerful opposition from a Congress that is already worried about the size of the federal deficit. The measure has nearly 200 cosponsors in the House of Representatives, but fewer than 30 in the 100-member Senate.

The emphasis in the national debate on the notion of "excellence" has meanwhile begun to worry some observers. Traditionally, federal spending on education has been designed to help children whose education is disadvantaged because of poverty, handicap or language difficulties. A number of education leaders and Congressmen fear that a preoccupation with excellence could displace this older interest in promoting equality.

To some extent, it has already happened. In 1981, the Reagan Administration announced a policy of "new federalism" under which a significant number of federal government functions would be handed over (or returned) to individual state governments. As part of that policy several programmes which had directed federal

funds towards particular categories of children were merged into two block grants, and responsibility for running them was transferred to the state governments.

The result, according to a report published by a Congressional committee last week, has been a substantial reduction in assistance to poor children or those from ethnic minorities. Representative Ted Weiss, chairman of the committee which issued the report, accused the Administration of failing to fulfil its responsibility to guarantee equal educational opportunities to all children.

He added: "The actions of this Administration have undercut programmes designed to assist minorities, the poor and the disadvantaged. The President has slashed budgets for these programmes. He has fired education experts who have dedicated their careers to helping the educationally deprived and he has restructured the consolidation of programmes for the disadvantaged into block grants, further reducing their budgets and effectiveness."

The report says that budget cuts alone eliminated more than 140,000 children from compensatory programmes for students from deprived backgrounds. The Emergency School Aid Act, which provided federal assistance to districts supporting school desegregation was also "substantially weakened".

Urban school districts that had used the programme lost millions of dollars and were forced to reduce or cut down their services to minority children.

Myths to make tomorrow's martyr

ISRAEL

Benny Morris on teaching for conflict and sacrifice.

Israeli schoolbooks barely touch upon the Israel-Arab conflict, ignore almost completely the Palestinian problem, do not even mention the 1.2 million Arabs who live under Israeli military rule in the occupied territories, and teach next to nothing about Israel's own Arab minority, according to findings revealed in a recent symposium in Tel Aviv University.

The symposium, attended by Mr Ze'evulun Hammer, the Education Minister, and many of Israel's leading educators, was entitled "Education in the shadow of wars."

Dr Daniel Bartal, a psychologist working in Tel Aviv University's school of education, recently completed a partial study of Israeli school textbooks, "looking through general readers (mostly used by pupils up to the age of 14) and history and citizenship books."

Dr Bartal found that the great majority of the textbooks could only lead to brainwashing of Jewish children against Arabs and to ignorance about the Arab-Israeli conflict on the historical and political levels.

The ministry's curriculum division made one important effort to correct this with the publication in 1979 of a major textbook for Grades 11-12 (17-18 year olds) entitled *The Israel-Arab Conflict*. But the book - which offers a perceptive and relatively balanced picture of the development and causes of the conflict since 1880 - was severely attacked by right-wing educators and politicians and is used only in a small number of liberal-minded high schools. The larger, primary and junior high school systems have nothing equivalent or similar to this textbook.

What is so often in the great majority of the country's schools was defined by Dr Bartal as "functional mythology" which prepares the Israeli (Jewish) child for a future in which he may have to fight and make sacrifices. The textbooks do not prepare the pupil for a future allowing for Arab-Israeli co-existence or for open-mindedness about the conflict, and peace appears only as an afterthought.

Dr Bartal based his findings on a thorough examination mainly of the "Israel Readers" series (Mikrot Yisrael), used in most schools by children aged between 6 and fourteen.

A Haaretz daily newspaper correspondent, Nili Mendler, recently cited some of the passages from these books. "War of Independence," a poem by Levin Kipnis, said: "... And then along seven routes they fled. Uprooted (themselves), bowed, fell, ran away, beaten and hurt - the banners were destroyed" (about the flight of the Palestinian Arabs in 1948).

From "Through Water and Fire," a story by Eliezer Smoli, about a 12-year-old who in the 1948 war volunteered to bring water to besieged Jewish soldiers in Jerusalem and is captured by Arabs: they fill his water bottle with explosives, send him towards the Jewish lines and blow him up. From the Arab lines then heard "a noise of wild laughter", in the course of the story, the Arabs are called evil and villains.

Side by side with the neglect of the history and causes of the conflict, and a biased description of the "Arab foe" is a mythical view of the Israeli fighter - all-powerful, humane, heroic. In "Alike," a story by Moshe Shamir, the hero "walked into the fire because that's how life is with us. He didn't want any other life... And if someone doesn't return, that's how it is in life. And don't talk of death because with us, in our young army, there aren't any who go absent without leave or run away from field of battle, none who throw away their gun. With us, they fight till the last bullet..."

The textbooks rarely mention the deal is left out. The "Israel Readers" for grade three, writing of the Israeli conquest of Ramle and Lydda, two Arab towns near Tel Aviv, in July



Triumphant young Israelis in the Gaza Strip, 1967... not thought given to peace and coexistence.

1948, states: "The attack stunned the enemy. In panic the Arabs began fleeing." (The enemy) who had boasted that he would complete the conquest of our land in 10 days." The Arabs of Lydda and Ramle, of course, were mostly expelled by the International Defence Force after the conquest of the towns.

Twelve-year-olds, reading the "Israel Reader" for grade six, are told schools should educate the country's children for "war and for peace", for the rigours of army life as well as for creativity and individualism, for killing when necessary but without inculcating hatred of the enemy.

Travel

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Education tops list of reforms

JAPAN

Barbara Casasson on a leading issue in the general election

Education reform has emerged as a major issue to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) campaign for Sunday's general election.

In speeches last week, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone declared that education would take top priority when reforms to streamline government bureaucracy have been completed. However, opposition parties and rival LDP factions consider Nakasone to be merely trying to divert public attention from the October conviction of former LDP prime minister Kakuei Tanaka in the Lockheed bribery case, over which the election was effectively called.

Blaming ignorance of traditional Japanese ethics for the deterioration of the education system, including the mounting school violence, Mr Nakasone said the Central Education Council (CEC), an advisory body to the education minister, would be instructed next year to review the 6-3-3 system (six years of primary and three years each of lower and upper secondary school) and the uniform first-stage entrance examination for national and local government-run four-year universities and two-year junior colleges.

He also advocated the introduction of foreign language courses at primary level, community work at primary and lower secondary school, improvement in the quality of teachers and limits to university professors' security of tenure to permit dismissal.

A focal point in the debate and



Preparation for the examination system which is heavily criticized

pressure for reform is the highly publicized examination hell, which virtually dictates the content of education, and the so-called deviation value (*Hensachi*).

This method of measuring ability, which is operated by private companies, is widely used by teachers and vocational guidance staff to orient pupils towards the upper secondary schools and higher education institutions that they have a chance of entering.

In the case of schools, it is a distortion of a directive issued by the education ministry 17 years ago for reports from lower secondary principals, as well as entrance exams, to be taken into account for admissions.

But according to ministry officials, teachers now rely too much on the *Hensachi* and too little on extra-curricular activities, character and general attitude in assessment. In a few cases, pupils sit *Hensachi* tests every month in their last year of lower secondary school

to monitor progress. Seven years ago, the ministry directed local education boards not to overemphasize the measurement method, but the instruction appears to have been largely ignored and last week the ministry again requested local boards not to rely too heavily on the *Hensachi* for higher education guidance.

This week, a new 18-member panel was due to meet for the first time to discuss a revision of the upper secondary school admission system and is scheduled to submit proposals next June. Although not stipulated in the regulations, a standard examination is held for all types of upper secondary schools - five subjects in most areas - with no provision for regional characteristics and institutions' specialities. Officials hope the panel will strike a balance between the present uniformity and a free-for-all, with each school setting a different emphasis.

Other proposals being considered

include streaming at lower secondary level. This was recommended in an interim report submitted by the curriculum study committee to the CEC last month after two years of work. The proposal is intended to remove some of the excesses of the system's egalitarianism, which generally makes no allowance for gifted pupils or under-achievers and was immediately criticised say predictably - condemned by the powerful left-wing Japan teachers' union (*Nikkkyoso*) as discriminatory.

Ministry officials take a cautious view of streaming, saying some experiments may be conducted, and favour greater diversity in the curriculum with more optional subjects.

Although Japan now seems to have reached some kind of consensus on the need for educational reform, how far it will go depends on the outcome of the election and whether campaign promises are fulfilled. Opposition parties and the *Nikkkyoso* seek to combine the two stages of secondary education (only the first is compulsory, though 94 per cent go on to the second), but ministry and other sources doubt that change will be as sweeping as indicated by the pre-political electioneering. Overall, the ministry wants to promote individuality at institutional and personal level, with the introduction of parallel courses, while observers point to the inherent conservatism of the ministry, the "glacial slowness" with which change takes place in Japan and the vast ripple effect of even the slightest modification to the rigidly interlocked education structure.

Nakasone has mentioned 1985 as the target date for the start of reform, which is considered realistic for new rules on upper secondary and university entrance, the *Hensachi* and teachers' training, for which a bill is due to be presented to the Diet (parliament) in the next session.

Need to enforce equality

CHINA

China's reputation as a land of sexual equality has received a setback with the uncovering in some schools of discrimination against girls.

Examinations for selection to senior middle schools in Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei province in north-east China, set a pass mark for girls which was 10 points higher than that for boys. More than 80 girls were thus denied places in key schools - those which are allocated more money and better teachers, and which take the brightest students.

When some of the parents discovered this, they complained to the authorities, and the municipal education bureau restored their daughters to their rightful places.

Although equality of the sexes has been the official line in China since the Communists came to power in 1949, the policy has yet to brood the millicia of tradition which counts males as superior to females. The authorities investigating the complaint in Shijiazhuang found that the selectors were discriminating against girls because those in charge thought which change had more potential than girls, and that enrolling more boys would ensure a greater rate of students eligible for university.

Commenting on the case, the official newspaper, *People's Daily*, said that such "feudalist ideas" would cause much trouble in the future, particularly with the state family planning programme which allows couples to have only one child.

Jane Marshall

LETTERS

Blanket tests too simple

Sir - Providing extra information so that parents can "judge how well a school was meeting their child's needs" is undoubtedly a good thing. Giving control of the curriculum to Croydon's education committee is something the merits of which require political discussion. But proposing blanket testing to evaluate heads and teachers, and intending that the results should judge "the quality of teaching or leadership" is quite another proposition (TES, December 2).

It is hard to believe that this is really what Mr Naismith, the CEO, intends, since it suggests a misunderstanding of the limitations of standardized testing, and could lead to some of the worst aspects of the United States minimum competency testing movement.

It really is not that simple. Standardized test scores give only a partial picture of children's achievements and therefore of a school's performance. Such partial measures give no information

about classroom processes. Thus, even if "problem schools" were identified using tests, the scores would give no information about where the "problem" lay.

The picture provided is also partial because test scores are determined by factors other than school ones; for example, social and environmental factors. Mr Naismith would do well to consult the DES on this (see "Social class has most effect on exams - DES", TES, December 2, page 3). Schools with a high proportion of middle-class children tend to obtain higher test scores; this means that it will tend to be the heads and teachers in schools serving disadvantaged children who are sacked if Mr Naismith's plan goes ahead, and this will not necessarily have anything to do with their teaching or managerial abilities.

As our recent investigation of standardized testing in local authorities showed (*Testing Children*, *Standard-*

ized Testing in L.E.A.s and Schools by GIPPS *et al.*, which was reviewed in the TES on November 18) where L.E.A.s have test information for schools there are real difficulties of interpretation by the L.E.A.'s advisers and inspectors even when they try to take into account what they know about each school's individual circumstances, such as social composition of intake and staffing. In such situations schools deemed to be doing less well than expected have sometimes been given help in terms of advisory support, courses for teachers, even extra resources. This practice, accepted by the teacher unions, is surely more satisfactory than the punitive measures suggested in Croydon. CAROLINE GIPPS HARVEY GOLDSTEIN STEPHEN STEADMAN University of London Institute of Education 21 Bedford Way London WC1

Special review

Sir - I read with interest Tony Watts' article on Redundant Approaches to the World of Work (TES, November 25). I am particularly pleased to see that the limitations of YTS are exposed and an emphasis put on the needs for schools to review in total the rationale for the courses they offer.

There is an area in the educational world that has been wrestling with this problem for some time and that is special education.

I believe teachers attempting to establish relevant courses for pupils with special needs have to take into account the likely long term unemployment or inappropriate employment prospects of the school leaver with special needs. This immediately affects course aims and objectives and course content.

It is no accident that there are a plethora of courses under the general title of "social and personal education". Although special educators have much to learn about curriculum design and development, nevertheless it is possible that conventional schools have much to learn from their colleagues in the special sector.

P R H TOMLINSON

Head
Thomas Delarue School
Tonbridge
Kent

YTS too late

Sir - David Young (TES, November 25) is extremely naive in his comments on the current YTS shortfall. The Manpower Services Commission should admit the reasons for large numbers of young people perceiving YTS as only third choice behind continuing education and full-time employment.

Mr Young well knows that the late delivery of YTS has been a crucial factor. YTS was not even a possibility for some young people because suitable schemes did not come into being until long after choices had been made. Lack of hard information about

scheme content etc. has also been a major factor. How could YTS be a credible choice for a young person when no factual information became available until, again, decisions had been taken and choices made? This information gap is particularly prevalent where Large Companies Unit schemes are concerned, where not even local scheme managers are aware of what their scheme is supposed to offer.

If truth be known, the launch of YTS this year has been dependent on the goodwill and effort of local authority services, particularly the careers service. The future of YTS, TVEI and other such projects will equally depend on the cooperation of local authorities.

Mr Young would do well to remember this before again trying to maintain MSC's record of accepting plaudits and avoiding blame.

CHRISTOPHER EVANS
21 Pangloss
Sydney
Clwyd

Swept aside

Sir - I welcome, and many others no doubt will, Russ Russell's Platform article "Time to take over training seriously" (TES, December 2). His comments and views are supported by the report in the same edition "Row over YTS Leaving Certificate". Compare the span of time over which TEC and BEC were introduced with that of YTS. The former are at least producing people of some use to the nation.

A large question mark hangs over the quality of YTS training and it will take some removing. At one stroke much of non-advanced further education, and training arrangements for young people and adults in industry and commerce, have been swept aside and little of substance has been put in their place.

J H DICKINSON

Principal
Wigston College of Further Education
Leicester

Fair distribution

Sir - Your editorial "Hearts and minds still to be won" (TES, November 19) on the subject of selective versus comprehensive education includes the statement that "the unfair distribution of resources in selective systems (shown most recently in the HMI report on the London Borough of Sutton) is not realized."

It is most discouraging for those who take the time and trouble to prepare press releases and arrange press conferences in an attempt to correct mistaken impressions or to rectify errors that have been made by HMI, to read such statements which show that you have taken no account whatsoever of the explanations made by us.

So I must set the record straight - there is no unfair distribution of resources in Sutton. The formula used for calculating a secondary school's staffing complement is one that HMI was involved in introducing into Sutton. It is agreed by all our secondary heads and includes weightings for various factors - for example, number of less able pupils as well as size of sixth-form.

Likewise, the general school allowance has per capita rates that are similar for all kinds of secondary school.

The less generous provision for science in the secondary modern schools compared with the grammar schools is nothing sinister, but stems directly from the fact that the grammar schools have been following Nuffield

Science courses for about fifteen years and they usually require six periods per week whereas the normal secondary modern science course tends to need only four periods; on the other hand there is less emphasis on creative and aesthetic subjects in the grammar schools.

Finally, our capital building programme over the past five or six years has devoted considerably more resources to secondary modern than to grammar schools.

What is said is that:

- All these facts were explained by me or my officers to your correspondents at the press conference on October 18, but apparently without effect; and
- The statements in the HMI report on Sutton remain uncorrected and the record is not put straight for posterity.

Perhaps the one important lesson that should be learned by the Secretary of State and the Senior Chief Inspector from the preparation of HMI reports on local education authorities is that the officers of the authority concerned, whom a report is being compiled, should be given ample opportunity at regular intervals to have sight of and to comment on preliminary drafts of the report so that errors and misconceptions do not eventually appear in the final report. It is surely in everybody's interest that such an arrangement should be built in to the system of reporting.

MAVIS PEART
Chairman
Sutton Education Committee

16-plus criteria

Sir - Your account of the report of the Joint GCE & CSE Council on 16-plus national criteria (TES, November 11) missed the most important thrust - that assessment should be based on how pupils achieve process objectives and that those process objectives are relevant to pupils of all ability.

Existing syllabuses and most of the 16-plus syllabus proposals retain the enormous subject content lists which make the emphasis on recall virtually mandatory especially for weaker

candidates (who are unfortunately less able to cope).

If we believe that science teaching should be about making pupils more scientific in their thoughts and actions then we must have the courage to assess simply that. I hope Sir Keith approves the report without reservation.

J TAFER

Head of science
Thomas Bennett Community School
Crawley
West Sussex

Working classes talent reserve creamed off

Sir - Isobel Shepherdson (TES, December 2) does touch upon what I take to be the principal factor underlying the decline in the number of working-class students being admitted to universities ("The Mystical of the Vanishing Students", TES, November 25), but does not reflect the full extent of the problem.

Whether we believe that an individual child's educational aptitude is the result of environmental influences or of his/her biological endowment, most working teachers, and educational researchers in the field, seem to be agreed that the educational attainment of children is, on the whole, a function of home or family background in some way.

The "ablest" children tend to be those who spring from backgrounds in which - for whatever reason - there is a tendency towards an above-average degree of critical, analytic thinking about the world around them, and a tendency to look upon expansion of personal knowledge as a good thing.

Time was when attitudes of this kind were not specific to any social group. However, the opportunities for expansion of personal knowledge were very unequally distributed between social classes, in that very considerable economic obstacles stood in the path of any working-class child who wished to pursue such a path.

The result was that by the 1930s, a considerable reservoir of inadequately-tapped talent had built up in the British working class, over many generations. We need only recall the early history of the Workers' Education Association and similar movements to be aware of the extent of this reservoir. And it is surely the case that one of the purposes of the 1944 Education Act was to extend equality of educational opportunity to working-class children, in order to allow them to fulfil such talent to an extent not previously possible.

What has happened in the ensuing 40 years is that, as Isobel Shepherdson

hints, working-class talent has taken advantage of the availability of free higher education to move out of the working class into the ranks of the middle classes. And what we as a society now need to face up to is the consequence of this for the composition of today's "working class", however that is defined.

It is surely the case that the working-class children of today are the children and grandchildren of people who lacked the powers of analysis required to reach the higher stages of the educational system, and whose limitations were compounded by the resulting sense of failure - people, in short, who have little sense of commitment to, or understanding of, the educational process, and therefore little ability to excite such a commitment in their children.

Parents who possess such commitment and ability are now rare in the working class - because the education system has ensured that such people, for the most part, move into the middle classes.

The reservoir of talent that once existed in the working class is, in consequence, nearly exhausted. The 1944 Act has enabled it to get qualified and get out, leaving behind a population that contains within it only a very limited ongoing capacity for generating in its children the kind of aptitude, or inclination for educational betterment, that leads young people to seek higher education.

This is one of the final ironies of the 1944 Act: that a legislative enterprise originally designed to promote equality of educational opportunity, and social mobility, has in the long term created a social structure in which not only wealth, but also intellectual endowment, will soon be distributed almost entirely on class lines.

A WYN HOBSON
67 Strid Pawr
Bethesda
Gwynedd
12

By invitation

Sir - Christopher Price's continued concern for the well-being of Madeley Court School would be welcome if only he were better informed.

His original interest seems to have stemmed from statements made by Philip Toogood, former headmaster of the school. By the time Christopher Price got them they were third hand and he then added his own slant.

His latest piece (TES, December 2) is even further adrift from reality. He says "I find the good Conservatives in Shropshire had to re-visit the Madeley Court governors in order to transform the curriculum and return the establishment to hymn-singing orthodoxy".

Certainly there are political reac-

tionaries in Shropshire, the County Council is Tory-controlled and the education committee formally appoints school governors (this was done after the four-yearly election in 1981).

However, in fairness it must be said that the committee accepts the nominations made by the local county councillors.

The result at Madeley Court School is that the governing body of 12 includes 10 members of the Labour Party.

I suggest that before Christopher Price writes any more about us he comes here to see what is really happening.

ARTHUR HOOKE
County councillor
and Madeley Court governor

Setting the record straight . . .

Sir - While it was very pleasing to see an article on one of our syllabuses (English Extra TES, November 25) there are two minor points which are incorrect: Mr O'Malley is, in fact, the retiring moderator, and the syllabus should not now be described as experimental since it has been running for more than 10 years and has an entry of some 13,000 candidates.

G M LAMBERT
Assistant Secretary
University of Cambridge
Local Examinations Syndicate

Sir - Your review of the new Blackboard-Sinclair Software (TES, December 2) mistakenly quoted a London address for customers enquiries.

Those interested in this new range of software should contact: Sinclair Research Ltd, Stanhope Road, Camberley, Surrey. (Tel: 0276 685311).

BILL NICHOLS
Sinclair Research Ltd
London

Sir - In Biddy Passmore's Profile of David Hargreaves (TES December 2) she states: "In 1979 he moved to the Oxford department of educational studies to the newly created post of reader". In fact, this was not a newly created post as my father, the late Harold Loukes was Reader in Education at Oxford from 1951 to 1979.

ANTHONY LOUKES
47 Waldemar Avenue
Ealing
London W13

Wrong impression

Sir - Miss Valerie Evans, our district inspector, is reported (TES, November 25) as suggesting that the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative is likely to encourage sex stereotyping in choice of courses. This startling statement must be challenged immediately before it becomes fashionable to use the initiative as a scapegoat for some very long standing problems in our educational system.

Such stereotyping has been all too apparent for a very long time within our society and we have to face the fact that in our schools we have failed to counteract deeply engrained pre-

judices over the appropriate occupations for men and women. The TVEI may well have drawn attention to the problem but to suggest that a few months of the programme have been a real influence, let alone a cause of the problem, is surely unreasonable.

The Manpower Services Commission criteria for TVEI projects are absolutely clear on the subject of equal opportunities, for there is a major task for all of us to influence parents and students to take a more balanced view of occupational opportunities - especially in areas of traditional engineering skills and activities. The 1984 Women in Science and Engineering Year presents us with a real opportu-

ity, but I do hope that leading influences in the world of education will give us a considered, rational lead in the campaign.

In conclusion, may I suggest that TVEI is likely to be a catalytic influence on many aspects of schooling. I hope that HMI will use their strong position to separate the problems exposed from the attempts to resolve them.

C J LEA
Project Director, TVEI
Education and Industry Centre
Stratford Road
Birmingham

Special plea

Sir - Reports concerning the proposed abolition of initial teacher training in special education have given me great cause for concern.

Robin Jackson's article "Will IN-SET ever be something special?" (TES, September 2) and subsequent letters have outlined very well the necessity for ITSE. But they made no mention of the highly specialized skills and knowledge needed by teachers in special education.

Skilled practitioners in special education have to meet the needs of a variety of handicaps. Several different techniques may be needed to teach only one area of the curriculum. For example, many of the severely mentally impaired children are unable to communicate through verbal language and therefore several sign and symbolic language systems have to be used.

These include the Makaton Sign Vocabulary, Rebus Reading Schemes, Bliss Symbols, Paget Gorman Sign System and Pictomake.

These alternative communication systems are only a small part of the curriculum core area of communication development. A sound knowledge of language development, language assessment schemes, pre-language



Special education . . . variety of skills needed

skills and symbolic play plus a basic knowledge of language theory are useful.

A high level of specialism is required of teachers in special education and it cannot be supplied by anything less than a highly structured, full-time course covering all aspects of the curriculum.

For its part ITSE is probably not as specialized as it ought to be. Many students feel that they enter their probationary year lacking the neces-

sary technical skills and knowledge. However, if ITSE is to be saved then surely the value of specialist qualifications ought to be reflected in special schools by implementing the policy of ensuring that at the very least teachers are qualified to do the job before being appointed or promoted.

G O'CALLAGHAN
64 Agar Road
Illogan Highway
Redruth
Cornwall

Buildings grant

Sir - Once again *The TES* can be congratulated for its sense of timing. The front story (December 2) dealing with Exmouth's Community College's desperate search for building moneys was well written. George's "False Economics" (Talkback).

As a newly deputy with responsibility for buildings and grounds at a community college of 1,750 pupils, I can understand the sense of frustration felt by colleagues in Exmouth. I shudder to think of the time and energy I have spent since September on matters relating to the condition of the buildings.

My heart sinks even further when Edward George's article is studied - although surely here is a man who knows a way around the problem but himself seems the same frustration? His point about the changing function of the caretaker is a valid one.

My suggestion would be to write into the system financial provision for some kind of maintenance engineer, especially in a large school, to offset the expense of calling in the so-called professionals (at £7 per call).

N F HOARE
Deputy principal
Longsands Community College
St Neots
Huntingdon

Course value

Sir - "Managing to learn" by David Trehown (TES, November 25) brought to mind a recent experience I had of a primary school management course organized by a Midlands education authority. The content of such courses needs careful consideration as he points out.

The advisers who organized this course had taken the initiative to invite a management consultant from a local polytechnic to lead part of the course. His approach was not to dictate a body of knowledge to us, the aspiring headteachers, rather to provide us with some insight into various styles of management, group dynamics and industrial management relations, then to offer us a framework for the course and leave us to construct the course according to what we saw as relevant.

It became quickly evident that many course members did not see any relevance in anything he had to offer on the process of management. Their priorities were the more routine ones of coping with the mass of official forms sent by the Education Office to schools, the liabilities of headteachers and the protection afforded them by the Education Office, the handling of the school budget and more: all genuine anxieties which must surely be taken into account in any overall plan of management training, but which,

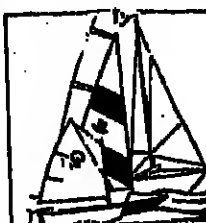
nevertheless, are only a part of the whole.

What perhaps was more telling was the response of the advisers to the framework the consultant offered. Some of them were quite prepared to overturn it and offer their own more rigid outline: a series of lectures by advisers and visiting speakers of such topics as "The Head as Manager", "The Head and the Curriculum", and "The Role of the Inspectorate". In the decision-making sessions that ensued there were some very heated exchanges indeed between teachers and advisers!

As it turned out, by far the most valuable element in the course was the opportunity we had to make a case study of a local school while at the same time being created from the amalgamation of an infant and a junior school. The headteacher was courageous enough to give us massive access to the school and provide us with a wealth of first-hand experiences. It is this - the value of experienced headteachers on management courses - that David Trehown underlines at the end of his article.

F W CARRUTHERS
Deputy Head
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North Shields
Tyne and Wear

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Real challenges

Sir - Martin Booth *et al* (TES, December 2) make suitably warm and empathetic references to "the development through time of the multicultural, interdependent society of which our pupils are a part", as part of their plea for more history teaching. They also refer to "the context of an open, democratic and pluralist society".

What a pity it is that all groups in our interdependent world and even in our multicultural Britain are not equally committed to Popper's open society as to political pluralism. What a shame it is that we cannot readily pick examples from all or even from most past or present societies of significant advances towards openness and pluralism, or indeed to many other arguable goods.

The problem of how far to tolerate the intolerant and the intolerable is still with us and in Britain is more severe than ever, since the ILA and several other L.E.A.s are apparently determined to impose a neo-Marxist orthodoxy upon their schools. What a pity indeed that Martin Booth and his fellow correspondents are too timid to face the real challenges to history teaching which face liberal education in the 1980s.

G G PARTINGTON
The King's School
Canterbury

Handy subject

Sir - In view of Sir Keith Joseph's ideas about pupil reports/profiles and at a time of cut backs could perhaps the remaining teacher training institutions scrap subjects for teachers such as psychology/history of education/philosophy and so on, and replace them with typing?

First aid would also be a handy subject as pupils tumble about dubious maintained buildings and workshops.

J R WATSON
152 Windy Hill Lane
Marske
Clevedon

A teacher's lot . . .

Sir - May I protest most strongly at Freda Briggs's letter (TES, December 2) concerning the earnings of policemen and teachers.

Any teacher who works "short hours" or has "the pleasure of long school holidays", it would seem, cannot be working in a worthy manner, and would perhaps be better considering joining the police force.

I find teaching an exhausting way of life and like many colleagues, rarely do less than 50 hours of work a week directly related to teaching.

I fail to see why my daily task involving great responsibility and stress, warrants earnings £2,000 p.a. less than that of a police constable. Despite the undoubted severity of some police work, much of the week's work is routine. Furthermore, unlike the police, I have no choice about when I go on holiday. I receive no overtime pay, nor do I have a rent/mortgage subsidy. I'm sure even Mrs Briggs must agree, teachers deserve a better lot.

TONY LYONS
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Northenden
Manchester

Crowd control

Sir - I should like to comment on Freda Briggs's letter comparing the lot of a policeman with that of a teacher.

On the question of controlling "tumults at football matches", I understand that among many policemen this is not an unpopular job. It is less tedious than most of their work, with extra pay involved. In addition the amount of trouble at football matches is much exaggerated by the media and takes up a small fraction of police time.

By contrast teachers often have to deal with these same football hooligans in a class of about 30, on their own, for about one hour at a time, week in week out with the aim of not just controlling them but educating them as well.

Neither is police work as intense



with teachers often working 50 hours a week in term time.

Finally, in order to teach candidates must have four years' training. People can still enter the police with few, if any qualifications. And it is galling to think that people who "do not write fluently" (Why the Force may not be with you, TES, December 2) can earn more than teachers who have spent years acquiring O and A levels and degrees.

C BIGGS
55 Ancaster Road
Ipswich
Suffolk

All day long . . .

Sir - Freda Briggs's comparison of the teacher's and the policeman's lot is accurate enough. I am reminded, however, of a brief conversation I had with a police constable a year or two ago, outside the gates of the school where I taught.

He said he wouldn't do a teacher's job for anything. "Stuck with them (the pupils) all day long, every day - you can keep it".

I didn't need to ask him to elaborate. I did suggest that our rewards, when they came, might be the greater. He seemed inclined to agree.

M TICEHURST
12 Spa Drive
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Surrey

The Total Curriculum

Kingsthorpe Upper School, on the outskirts of Northampton, opened under another name in 1973 and rapidly hit trouble. Children and many staff came from two single-sex secondary moderns: the pupils included the first batch of ROSA conscripts. They had been promised the delights of a purpose-built community school – teaching facilities, squash courts, swimming pools. They found a building site.

It wasn't long before the school made disaster headlines in national papers. Clifford Romney, the founder head and (according to teachers who survived the sticky start) a "man of vision", changed the school's name and continued to pursue his vision of a genuinely comprehensive school and curriculum. Now the school is, orderly, neatly uniformed and "vastly oversubscribed", with 1,180 pupils, 210 in the sixth form. And its "total curriculum", followed by every student for three years (they come in from middle schools at 13-plus) is a reality.

The system is unusually simple to describe. The present head, David Maw, exaggerates only slightly when he says you can fit the timetable on a postcard. The school is divided into eight teaching faculties, and until they are 16, students spend the same amount of time every week in each. English has three hours a week, social studies four, science and technology four, mathematics three, design three, physical education two, modern languages four, and music and drama two.

Mode 3 exam. More than one Mode 3 course devised in the school had been taken up by an exam board as a Mode 1: some are now being translated into 16-plus exams.

In all, 13 O levels and CSEs are on offer. Most teachers teach for 22½ hours in a 25 hour week. Senior teachers teach 18 hours, the head 12 hours: "We don't have a lot of people sitting around in offices." Class sizes are kept to about 25. Much of the work is based on six-week "modules", and depends on teacher-produced materials.

The system inevitably imposes restrictions on exam choices at 16. Integrated science – the Schools Council SCISP O level or a CSE – is the only option. There are two certificate integrated social studies exams: separate subjects such as history have to be studied in "twilight" course provided by the school's flourishing adult and community side. So do skills subjects such as typing and cooking. And employs such as art and home economics have been lost, subsumed into an integrated design faculty.

There has to be some differentiation between O level and CSE groups. To some subjects students are sorted out at Christmas in their fourth year. For English literature, SCISP, and modern languages teachers say requirements diverge too far from CSE to continue mixed ability without jeopardizing results. The maths faculty separates off about 55 students to move at a faster pace in their last five terms. But about 90 students from a year group of 320 end with O level maths.

More than one teacher in these subjects told me they "longed for the 16-plus", so they could avoid the split. In other subjects – such as English language and social science – decisions are made at the last possible moment, and the school does not frown on double entry. In social science last year, 53 per cent of the fifth years achieved grades A to C at O level: for English language, the proportion was 45 per cent.

The system of powerful and independent faculties, each with its own teaching block, staffroom, and internally organized responsibilities for discipline and curriculum, seems to make for energetic teamwork, and to facilitate change. This year radical alterations were made in three faculties. Every science teacher was asked to teach technology, and every student will now study structures, mechanisms, electronics and pneumatics. This work was injected into a science curriculum that already emphasized applied science and practical work based on everyday topics – motor cars, photography, cosmetics, and house-

hold electricity.

A very ambitious modern language policy also started this year. More than two thirds of each year group will now take two modern languages up to 16, ending with exams or graded tests. The remaining 80 will take one modern language, and have a "language awareness" course that will include work on English. And the design faculty went for a radical scheme concentrating entirely on the design process, rather than on finished products, and basing most of the work on problems identified by students.

In these highly instrumental days, it was unusual to hear the uncompromising intentions of some of the faculties. "A lot of the early 1970s is still here", said one teacher. Gary Sanderson, head of maths, was sceptical about the current emphasis on applied and "relevant" mathematics: "We want them to do real mathematics, which is problem solving. Often you can't see a use for the work, and they can't, but it's fun."

Alan Smith, head of English, was just as uncompromising when talking of the kind of English where students practise things like writing job applications: "We're not anyone's service department."

John Orton, from the design department, did not believe in teaching a repertoire of skills: "Children learn the skills they need to solve a problem they have chosen. We're interested in the process of design, not in finished products."

But with the high-mindedness, it's clear that a great deal of thought must have gone into making the courses as interesting and appropriate for the vast majority of students as possible. Teachers, used from the start of the school to thinking through the curriculum, are ready than many to take on new ideas, and go through the in-service and development work required. "It

Kingsthorpe Upper School, Northampton and John Beddoes School, Presteigne are two 'good' comprehensives – disciplined, thoughtful, 'oversubscribed' – that have reached almost diametrically opposed conclusions about what makes a successful comprehensive curriculum.

At Kingsthorpe, a 13–18 upper school, students follow a 'total curriculum' up to the age of 16, with every student spending the same amount of time every week on every subject. At John Beddoes, an 11–18 school, students are setted or banded after their first term in the school, the fastest are accelerated through a five year course in four years, and the slowest are largely separated into a 'business enterprise' group from the fourth year.

Of course, the differences are not altogether clearcut. O-level

helped that most of us had been through this kind of process before", said a scientist, discussing this year's introduction of technology.

A group of sixth-formers were enthusiastic about the school's policy: "It's a good idea to delay important decisions". One historian praised the social studies course: "You learn to analyse information. It's easy to catch up on the facts". They all enjoyed the six weeks of community work: every student has a spell working in a hospital, playground, old people's home, or similar institution, and the sixth-formers said it was "brilliant".

Scientists had found the catching up on facts harder, but the school had some good results at A-level science last year, with three students achieving straight As, and a Cambridge entrant. In general, the students liked the fact that "courses are not too rigid, you're that much freer to follow your own ideas".

The sixth-form careers teacher said that Kingsthorpe's curriculum had taken a bit of selling to universities at the beginning, but was now completely accepted: In recent years only the Camborne School of Mines had queried the integrated science policy.

Senior teachers were less sure that the needs of the least able were being entirely met. The school has few remedial pupils, and no remedial department. Facilities appoint teachers responsible for slower (and able) children, and special help is given to less able students in their mixed-ability groups; teachers would like more. But no teacher I talked to seemed to question the grand design of the "total curriculum". What they wanted were slight changes of emphasis in some faculties.

Recently, the staff have been talking about introducing some kind of technical and vocational

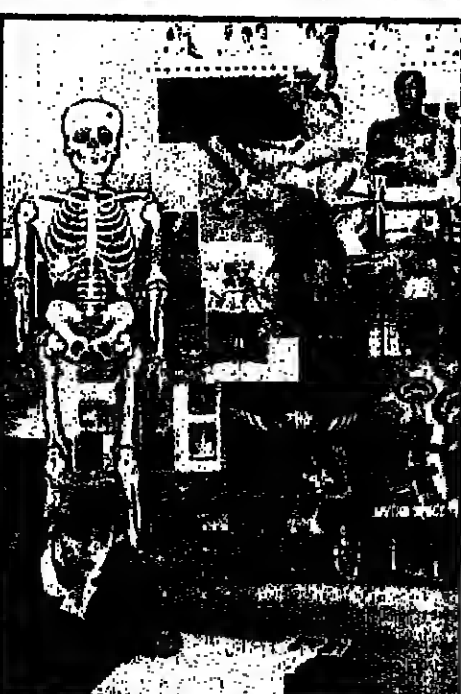
(TVEI) scheme and encouraging "a drift towards the technical and vocational for all students", as David Maw put it. But he believes that this would not be at all incompatible with the "total curriculum" idea. "The beauty of our modular system is that it is relatively easy to insert new approaches – and leave out less successful ones."

The Kingsthorpe system removes many of the anomalies found in weaker versions of the common curriculum. The idea of "one practical subject" disappears: all faculties are supposed to provide a balance between practice and theory, and most seem to do so. Creative art and design, music and drama, and PE are visibly valued – and examined – and are part of the menu for all students.

There are few anomalies – faculties genuinely seem to work as entities, not as loose federations of traditional subject departments. Students have plenty of choices, but they come within schemes of work with pretty clear objectives. Cultural differences between different classes, sexes or ethnic groups have less impact where all students follow the same courses.

Kingsthorpe has many advantages: its good middling comprehensive intake, its compact catchment which allows it to function as a real community school, and extend opportunities for pupils by breakfast and twilight classes (shared with adults). It has good buildings: each faculty has a proper block, with its own staffroom.

But it is hard to believe that the school would have recovered so successfully from its early troubles had not its radical and ambitious aims made it an interesting and engaging school for teachers, and had not its unusual approach to curriculum been acceptable to parents, employers, and higher education.



Kingsthorpe: technology, design, music and drama for all 16.

The Mid Wales Express

requirements in some subjects mean that Kingsthorpe's mixed ability policy has to be abandoned after Christmas in the fourth year. The special groups at John Beddoes are integrated with the rest for some of their work, and teachers follow common O-level and CSE syllabuses where the Welsh exam board allows. The John Beddoes option scheme requires students to take a specified range of subjects.

And of course the schools are catering for different intakes, in different circumstances. But even so, the contrast between the two approaches is striking.

Virginia Mekins reports from both schools below and overleaf Bob Doe looks at the implications for the comprehensive curriculum of Sir Keith Joseph's attempts to reintroduce selection.

John Beddoes School, Presteigne, was founded in 1565. Its head, Dr Jim Moran, likes to tell the story of how its founder endowed it with land, and how a curfew bell is still rung every night according to his bequest so that the income does not revert to his heirs. The grammar school went comprehensive in 1970, when it got new buildings and absorbed the secondary modern from Knighton, a few miles away.

The school is in Wales, just over the border from Shropshire and Hereford, and its 700 pupils come from all three counties and a 23-mile-wide agricultural catchment area. Four-fifths of them have to catch the school buses promptly at four o'clock. When Dr Moran took over, in 1973, there were 434 pupils: the school is "bursting at the seams" and new buildings are planned.

It is a very ordered school. Even the sixth form wear neat uniforms. Dr Moran says he is often out and about in the corridors: "That's not on," he said to one pupil, pointing at a fractionally loose tie. Pupils are banded or setted, depending on the subject, after one mixed ability term. The staff spend a lot of time teaching – Dr Moran says that contact time is 85.6 per cent against the national average of 77 per cent.

The present curricular policies stem from an HMI report in 1979, which was generally favourable but, as always, had some criticisms. Dr Moran set up a standing staff conference on curriculum, partly to respond to the critical bits. All the staff can take part, and more than half usually come to meetings.

One of the first things they considered was the needs of able pupils. The solution they arrived at was an "express stream", with some 15 bright pupils who bypass the second year completely, and take O levels after four years.

Last year, they considered the least able children (the school has a sizeable remedial group, some coming from a designated special unit in a local primary school, who spend half of their first year, a third of their second year, and a quarter of their third year on separate remedial work.) This year they started a "business enterprise" option for 26 fourth years (only three of them girls).

At John Beddoes, fourth year options outside compulsory maths and English are organized in six groups. Each group has a mix of practical and academic subjects, and students must choose one subject from each. Students are required to take one science subject, one humanities, and one from creative design (art, craft, design technology) and the home economics range. Business enterprise now spans four option groups, leaving two other choices for its students.

The enterprise scheme, now at the end of its first term, seems a great success. It has been funded partly by grants from the Welsh Development Board and the Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools, and it forms part of a Pwys Rural Enterprise scheme. The Royal Society of Arts is validating the scheme, and awarding a certificate to successful students.

A lot of the students' work is based on small enterprises they have started. They bought a field of sweetcorn for £10 and sold its produce for more than £50. While picking the corn they spotted a carrot field and bought the crop; then raced the frost to cash in on it. They also noticed that the Ministry of Defence was throwing out fluorescent light fittings they bought them, cleaned them up, tested them, and sold them at a profit.

Around the school, they have been making and selling candles, selling Christmas cards, and running a soft drinks bar in a science laboratory. Some are growing house plants for sale. All these enterprises need planning, costing, and report writing. Regular board meetings require written and oral reports, and minutes must be taken.

When I was there one group of students were deciding to abandon a magazine plan, after unfavourable costings. Another was planning, with diagrams on the blackboard, the layout of their Christmas stall. Others were putting together accounts and reports for the board, and getting computer printouts of results. Each

student holds 25 shares in the company: the day I visited, they were worth 42p.

Motivation seemed very high, both for students and teachers (14 are involved and prepared to cooperate by swapping teaching so groups can go out and about). Students said the scheme was "brilliant." Teachers were pleased with the students' response.

Anne Goddard, the senior remedial teacher (12 of the six students came from the remedial group) said: "It gives them confidence: they've made a lot of progress orally."

Elizabeth Richardson, the head of English, said the work suited them much better than the "quite literary" CSE, where even the most practical elements had to be based on imaginary situations. "This is real: they write about things they have really done." But the academic side is not neglected: students are expected to read books for English, and study local geography and history.

"Motivation is the name of the game," said Dr Moran. "These are pupils who can't wait to leave school: it is no good their taking some silly Mode Three. They have tons of business acumen." The scheme will last a year: next year students will go out for three days a week on work experience.

People – both staff and parents – were much more ambivalent about the "express stream" policy. "Some people didn't like the idea at all – there was a lot of discussion," I was told. It's an awkward solution in many ways. Students, having skipped the second year, have a lot of catching up to do in subjects such as science and French. They miss the part of the science course that is most firmly rooted in practical experience and real life applications, and have to cover some content quickly and theoretically. "We might spend two

or three weeks playing with a topic like acidity in the second year", said Mr Tony Malpas, a chemist. "In the third year we can give them half a double period on it: there's no time to get them sucking lemons."

Accelerating about half a class makes for awkward numbers and teaching arrangements. In science, second year classes go over 30 as a result. In French, the express group are taught separately. There is an express maths group, with some of the accelerated pupils and some others, who take O level in their fourth year. Last year they had excellent results – nine As, five Bs and two Cs. This year there are more of them, but the express class of 23 compares very favourably with the biggest maths class, with 36.

The accelerated pupils have to make their complicated fourth year option choice after two years. They have missed a whole year of compulsory music, drama, art and craft, as well as wider and more leisurely experience of academic subjects. Teachers say that some take to the older age group "like ducks to the water", but some do seem immature. One or two teachers felt that some would end up as borderline CSE pupils, which, as one said "seems to defeat the object of the scheme." But against that, they believed that the second year pace was often too slow for the brightest.

Third year pupils I talked to seemed happy and settled in their new group: "You get your own level of work here." But a fourth year said: "I wouldn't go up again, and I wouldn't advise anyone else to." Parents have the final say as to whether their children join either the express or the business enterprise group: this year four families decided against expressing, and one vetoed the business enterprise idea.

According to sixth-formers, the option scheme itself is unsatisfactory. They liked the school: "It's well-disciplined, which I think is good." But they felt they had lost out by choices at 14. "I wanted to do French and geometrical drawing, but couldn't do both," said one. Two had done woodwork, and regretted it: "a complete waste of time." "It would be good if a modern language was compulsory all the way up," said another.

John Beddoes is a good school in the traditional British style. It has a strong pastoral system, with regular meetings of house heads to follow up students' problems at school or at home, and a liaison committee where other agencies come in to discuss problem cases (parents only come when invited). Its exam results are good.

Within the constraints of the school buses, it has a strong extracurricular life, with clubs, lots of trips to broaden students' cultural experiences, a highly successful tapers' magazine for local house-bound and handicapped people involving many students of all abilities, and so on. It is a community school, providing for adults as well as school pupils.

It has chosen to meet its pupils' needs by clear differentiation at the extremes of the ability range, and seem to have hit on a highly successful approach with the bottom 20 per cent.

But there are costs, particularly for the ablest, and the inevitable problems of discriminating between children at the margin, labelling them at 11 or 14 as a particular kind of pupil (it was noticeable how often the business enterprise teachers murmured "these children" when discussing the pupils' capabilities.) It will be very interesting to see how the policies develop, when they have been going long enough for serious assessment.



Rural enterprise: pupils sell lemonade, houseplants and Christmas cards and tape a community magazine.

FEATURES

The new selection

After the years of cultural revolution known as the Great Debate, the Government in 1981 advised secondary schools in *The School Curriculum*. "There is no overwhelming case for providing all pupils between 11 and 16 with curricula of a broadly common character, designed so as to ensure a balanced education..." It went on, "Every pupil up to 16 should sustain a broad curriculum. The level, content and emphasis will be related to pupils' abilities and aspirations but there should be substantial common elements..."

Teachers who had long regarded a broad curriculum common to all pupils as the *sine qua non* of comprehensive education felt vindicated. Used to being led from behind, they were heartened to find their nominal commander-in-chief falling into step.

But within months a replacement for Mark Carls had been drafted in and Sir Keith Joseph had barely taken the field before he was heard to sound the retreat. Several of Sir Keith's actions undermined his antipathy to the common school and the common curriculum. An early example was his refusal to sanction secondary reorganization schemes involving the closure of grammar schools. The protected curriculum, it seemed, meant the protection of the traditional academic one for a select minority.

Then there was his avowal of the MSC's New Training and Vocational Education Initiative. Whatever the real intentions of that programme and the actual way it is being used in schools, Sir Keith was pretty unequivocal in saying that he saw nothing wrong in some pupils pursuing academic, theoretical studies while others were funnelled into more practical, vocational pursuits. He made plain also his desire to see a return of the old technical schools.

Sir Keith's interventions in the plans already advanced for the common 16-plus examination are also regarded as a sign of his determination to sustain pure, narrow, academic traditions rather than to use the examinations to broaden the curriculum, though he has asked for some exams to be "broadened" or "broadened".

When all this is put together with the continual prompting by ministers that local authorities should consider the reintroduction of selection, what the Government now seems to be saying is not that the curriculum should be of "a broadly common character" with "substantial common elements" but that a greater degree of differentiation is required in what is taught to various categories of pupils. In effect, that there should be a return, either by the re-organization of schools or within the existing comprehensives, to a version of the old tripartite system which the common school was supposed to have replaced.

That is:
□ a highly academic stream reminiscent of the grammar school;
□ a technical stream not unlike the old technical schools; and
□ a more basic curriculum for the also-rans.

But no one has ever suggested that a common curriculum meant everyone should cover the same work at the same level or pace or in the same way. So if some differentiation between pupils is acceptable in the common school, is there necessarily a conflict between providing every child with a broad, common education and the delivery of that learning through quite different streams and courses with different ends in view? That, particularly for the 14 to 16 period of schooling, is the crucial question posed not only by Sir Keith Joseph's stance, but by the unfriendly environment in which comprehensives now exist, beset as they are by cuts and critics.

Though recent attempts to reintroduce grammar schools seem to have been scouted by vociferous parents, it should not be assumed that because the public are against the notorious 11-plus, they are for the common school and its curriculum. Rising expectations may make a vote for selection as unlikely as a vote against home ownership. But the popular idea of educational opportunity may not encompass the moves made in recent years towards restricted option choices and more courses of a general educational nature with social aims and unproven currency in employment and university entrance - least of all at a time when competition in those markets is fiercer than ever. The voracious appetite for hard



Two years ago the Government urged secondary schools to adopt a broad common curriculum. But the arrival of Sir Keith Joseph as Education Secretary has heralded a drastic switch back to more selective practices akin to separate academic, technical and low attaining streams. Bob Doe looks at the implications for the two main approaches to the secondary curriculum: core and options and the large or extended common core.

examination results ascribed by teachers to parents can only have been further stimulated by the compulsory publication of examination results. And giving parents greater choice of schools further reduces the chances of schools balancing these demands against broader educational aims.

Sir Keith's formula may be contrary to orthodox curriculum theory, but is it all that remote from the actual practices of schools, subject as they are to these influences? It is widely accepted within many comprehensives that pupils can be parcelled into different categories by various hidden and overt forms of banding, streaming or setting. "Like Christianity, comprehensive education has not so much failed as never been tried," is how David Hargreaves, the newly appointed chief inspector in Inner London puts it. The core and options system allows considerable variation in the kind of course pupils experience, even within the so-called core. Even if every child is required, for instance, to study science, for some pupils this might mean two or three O level courses at the expense, perhaps, of other areas of the curriculum. For the second division it may mean general science, or less satisfactorily, just a single science such as biology. There may also be some sort of simplified, practical science for non-examination pupils, possibly as part of an integrated course.

This sort of variation does not necessarily accord with the new selection championed by Sir Keith Joseph. In designing the lower level courses, of the core and options there is a tendency to split the O level and to simply water down the content and approach of the course

learning - both practical and theoretical - similar status in an extended core of subjects which may account for as much as 80 per cent of the timetable. Mixed ability groups may be an ideal - though they are rarely universal at the 14 to 16 level - and decisions on GCE and CSE entry are deferred to as late a stage as possible, sometimes to the penultimate term of the fifth year.

One notable example of this extended core is that operated at Carisbrook school on the Isle of Wight. The former head, Peter Cornell, now chief inspector for Cornwall, maintains that, while recognizing the special needs of the most able and least able minorities, the main focus of the curriculum should be on the middle two-thirds which, theoretically, are found between 15 per cent above and below the average level of attainment, and that to prejudice the potential of pupils in that narrow band with any sort of accuracy is virtually impossible. Not all comprehensives enjoy an intake with a full range of attainments, however, and those that do may find such a middle-of-the-road approach harder to sustain.

It is this curriculum that tries to give greater equality of expectation, that Sir Keith Joseph's stance seems to conflict with most. Creaming off the academically able is said to depress the aspirations of the remainder of teachers and pupils; it also emphasizes the fact that all forms of learning are not equally valued. And measures like the low attainers programme assume the "bottom 40 per cent" can be readily and reliably identified.

The limbo of the common 16-plus has not helped those anxious to avoid premature pigeon-holing either dependent as they are on syllabuses equally suited to O level and CSE work. And the attempt to provide a broader curriculum for all in about three-quarters of the timetable has often meant special mode three exams which attempt to give credit to what are regarded as essential elements of the broad coherent curriculum but which do not fit in to the existing subject-centred syllabuses on offer. Even if the common 16-plus gets the green light next summer, it may not help.

A narrow interpretation of the national criteria could put paid to many of these tailor-made courses and to any hopes that may still linger that the new exam will rescue the beleaguered wagon-train of comprehensive education; it is as though the US Cavalry had gone over to the Indians.

There is little evidence to indicate whether the low attainer is better served by pursuing something like a full syllabus in a high expectation regime, or limiting the focus of their work to a reduced syllabus. There may not, in fact, be a single best buy - the optimum solution depending very much on specific circumstances, cases and subjects.

There are those however who fear that easier alternatives threaten to deprive pupils not only of the chance to achieve high status qualifications on which so many opportunities depend, but also the essential knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes and experiences thought to be needed by every school leaver as the basis of an independent, responsible, healthy, productive and satisfying life in an industrial democracy.

Learnings of that kind might be within the grasp of most pupils, even if their abstract academic wrappings make them inaccessible to many at present. HMI believes they are and argue that these learnings are unlikely to be found intact in conventional school subjects and timetables. There is little reason to suppose, therefore, that they would be guaranteed by a clutch of good O levels. It is conceivable, therefore, that the alternative courses proposed for low attainers freed to some extent from the O level syllabuses could better provide a more practical curriculum and that it would be the academic stream which could lose out in this respect.

George Walker, head of Cavendish school, Hemel Hempstead, and another apostle of the extended core, wrote in *The TES* in 1975, "The description 'less able' in so far as it has any helpful meaning suggests slower and more carefully structured progress along the same road and not down a different one unless it leads essentially to the same goals." If there is to be a rapprochement between the common core and the more differentiated curriculum, it will probably be in terms such as these.

Until there is, suspicions will linger that, when pupils won't learn because the way that learning is offered, it is too readily assumed that they can't learn, and that too often the alternatives they are offered are second class, time-filling entertainments that deny them equal access not only to their own share of the human and material resources but also the esteem of the school.

REVIEW

No Socialism, no sympathy

GLC financial support for fringe theatre has strings attached. Hugh David discusses the implications

1983 was originally a powerful piece of theatre-in-education toured around London schools by a company called Theatre Centre. It achieved a notoriety unusual for TIE at the beginning of this year when Mr Norman Tobitt, MP, described its treatment of the Cruise missiles issue as "at best irrelevant and at worst decidedly harmful" and the Sun weighed in, opining that the play was "beneath contempt". (Reviewing it at the time in *The TES* I found it "both responsible and serious without ever being dull".)

Yes, it was unequivocally anti-Cruise, left-wing and even unilateralist in stance, but that was just the play. What the critics failed to notice was that a detailed set of Teacher's Notes prepared by Theatre Centre set the whole thing in context and dealt scrupulously fairly with the nuclear arms debate.

Six months on and shorn of the Teacher's Notes, 1983 had become something very different. Leaving the classroom far behind, it was cropping up at fringe theatres in various parts of London. Performances at venues like the Drill Hall in Central London were given as part of the Greater London Council's "Peace Year". Advertising leaflets and posters bore a photograph of a dog daubed with the emblem of CND and the slogan "GLC, Working for London and Peace". Through these theatrical (as opposed to educational) performances the play had become political and was being used by the Labour-controlled GLC (which subsidized Theatre Centre to the tune of £30,000 in the 1982/83 financial year) to make an overtly political point.

This is one example of a trend in the financing of fringe, community and educational drama in the capital which is distorting the nature of the business in the view of many professional theatre people. It comes about because of the GLC's position as the most important single source of revenue for many theatre companies and venues. In just one year the Council's Arts and Recreation Committee finances a far greater number of productions - albeit generally on a very much smaller scale - than all the West End impresarios put together would do in a lifetime.

The facts and figures are undoubtedly impressive. In the 1982/83 financial year the GLC paid out a total of £1,454,861 to various community and ethnic arts groups. £240,730 went in direct grants to 46 drama and dance groups; another £355,572 funded "ethnic arts events" ranging from the Caribbean Cultural International (£1,500) to the Young Vic-World Wildlife Fund Play Competition (£7,500).

But whereas those concerned with theatre can only welcome what critics have called the "prodigious" of the GLC's arts funding, an increasing

number of them are also worried by the methods used to decide in which direction the monies should flow. Supplies are not automatic, nor are they unconditional. The cheques have strings attached.

The GLC's current arts policy is set out in a seven-page document written by Tony Banks, left-wing Chairman of the Arts and Recreation Committee (and since the June election Labour MP for Newham North West) in February 1982. It lays down four criteria which have to be met, in whole or at least in part, by any company expecting financial assistance. The second paragraph lists a series of "identified priority areas". Companies, the document implies, have to prove that they are concerned with these before the coffers will be opened. Specifically, they should be able to show that they are involving the local community in their work; that their work itself reflects "the unemployment crisis" in London; that they are intending to work closely with the ILEA and borough councils, or that they are concerned with "the multi-ethnic nature of London's culture".

No Socialism, no sympathy, for as the document goes on to admit, "the arts are a major political issue... For the Labour OLC the concepts of 'art for art's sake' or 'few but roses' cannot be acceptable when we are faced with massive social problems engendered by unemployment, homelessness and public expenditure cuts all emanating from a Tory Government".

But although this unambiguous statement that the arts should be used to make a political - and this time a blatantly party political - point is contentious enough, the real worry of those on the receiving end is not so much with the content of the work but the form that it will take. There have been left-wing plays before - works by Brecht, Edward Bond and Howard Brenton have all been seen in the last two years at the National Theatre - but there has never before been a policy which seeks actively to demolish existing structures. Tony Banks' policy document speaks of breaking an "orthodox, establishment-minded, conservative and unimaginative" arts policy in "a radical and dramatic fashion". It is quite clear that it envisages doing this by actively taking the culture to the people. That is what is meant by "the need for community involvement" and "the need for closer links with the ILEA and borough councils". Since February 1982 Community and Ethnic Arts have been the GLC's top arts funding priority. And it is that which an increasing body of actors and directors are against.

By their very nature community and ethnic arts events are divisive, appealing to and specifically designed for one section of the community



Viv Wilkins (Susannah Bunyan), Carl (Calvin Simpson), Cadric (Winston Crooks) in Theatre Centre's "1983"

which has in common only the area in which it lives, its racial origin, sex or sexual orientation or political leaning. Working for his of London like that does not amount to "Working for London", the slogan the GLC has adopted.

Nor does it do any service to theatre, according to Jonathan Caldico. A stage manager in the commercial West End, he also has a belief in the fringe as theatre in its own right. "There is no need for 'alternative' theatre to be political or sectional in its appeal", he says. "Things would be

far better if we could keep it as good, cheap, accessible entertainment". The lunchtime shows he writes, directs and presents with a company of friends and colleagues are an attempt to provide exactly that. His latest play *A Case of Inferior Goods* ran for two weeks in the upstairs room of a "theatre pub" in Central London this summer. The east of four provided their own clothes and props and worked for nothing. The play collected a good review in the trade paper *The Stage* and cost Caldico £65.70 to mount. That, together with the rental charged by the pub, he more than recouped from box office takings and the company came out with a modest profit.

Nothing could be further from the community and ethnic schemes currently favoured by the GLC. Despite their - intentionally - more restricted appeal they ironically come much dearer. As part of its contribution to this year's London International Festival of Theatre, the council made a substantial contribution towards the £30,000 show *Raising the Titanic* mounted by Welfare State in Limehouse, a deprived area of London's dockland. The end-product of a month's intensive work with local youth and community organizations was a show which several national critics found "tatty" and unconvincing. They were especially hostile to its central idea that the passengers on the doomed liner were an accurate model of today's society.

GLC funding, too, was behind *September in the Plak*, "London's first Lesbian and Gay Arts Festival". £30,000 went into funding a series of events for and about homosexuals. The readings, concerts, workshops and performances hosted by venues throughout London were however characterized by an indifferent standard and arranged by an organizing committee wracked by such internal dissension that the GLC was forced to temporarily freeze its grant. Among other events were "women only" workshops and closed sessions run at the ILEA-funded Cockpit Theatre.

The arts and theatre in particular, Caldico and his colleagues argue, cannot be regarded as simply a political tool, however widely that word is interpreted. Agitprop is not enough. Standards still count for something. Giving the inhabitants of Limehouse a high old time "on the rates" for a month might laudably raise their spirits and even their political consciences for that period, but ultimately leaves them as high and dry as before, and the rest of London at best only momentarily moved by their demonstration of their plight.

Such sectional funding too encourages a hermetic form of theatre which has nothing to say to or, like those women-only workshops, positively excludes the wider audience. And that, surely, is the last thing that Tony Banks really wants.

Suffused with a bluish glow

Brian Morton on the most vocal Intellectual propagandist of the Right



The Aesthetic Understanding: Essays in the Philosophy of Art and Culture. By Roger Scruton. Carcanet Press £12.95. 0 85635 487 2.

If *Private Eye* is to be believed, Roger Scruton feels "unclean" if he writes less than 4,000 words a day. His recent publishing record suggests that he does. He has five books (including *The Aesthetic Understanding*, his latest), a controversial *Times* column; reviews and articles in *The Observer* and *PN Review*; more recently, his own *Salisbury Review*, a quarterly journal of conservative thought. Scruton has become the Right's most prolific and vocal propagandist.

As such, he precisely reflects one of the puzzles of the Thatcherite Conservatism (conservatism

the bluish glow - religion, architecture, education, sex (a pleasure still to come in a full-length study), music and literature. Politicization inevitably elevates the arts to a more than usually pivotal role. Scruton is a trained philosopher and in *The Aesthetic Understanding*, a collection of recent essays, turns his polemic on recent developments in literary and cultural criticism.

His immediate premise is that aesthetics is not a footnote to analytic philosophy but a central component of the philosophical enterprise, an examination of our relations with the world and with other people. Contemporary structuralist and semiotic thought has tended to make a fetish of "the text" - literary, visual, musical - turning it into an icon which can only be made meaningful via the scientific apparatus brought to bear by the specialized critic. The obsession with "theory" - focus of recent impassioned debates at Oxbridge - has supplanted what Scruton calls "a battery of useless technicalities" of great formal elegance but of little applicable worth, more mystification than help.

Scruton questions the tendency to define aesthetics as a search for the "nature of art" and for the key to its "coded" meanings; aesthetics should be (as it was originally) an examination of the nature of aesthetic experiences. We should not look at what art is, but at what it does. Scruton develops the distinction between the work and our experience of it, between meaning (its) and association (mine). Modern critics have ruled both the artist's intentions and our emotional responses out of court. Scruton restores the evidence by locating the crucial focus in the public text and the common reader, a kind of populism that slaps hard against the hermeneutic of contemporary critical practice.

Scruton provides tough and persuasive arguments directed at more specific aesthetic areas:

music, photography, the familiar architectural diatribes ("The Architecture of Leninism"), and a closing essay on Beckett and the "Cartesian soul". The range of reference is impressive, the argument rigorous and comprehensive. But where, in all this, has the politics gone? "Leninism" is a bit of a mare's nest; there is little overtly political argument. Scruton is a politicized rather than a political writer. Everything he touches is brought within a particular purview (which is often tacit and unpolitical; in that he is most typical of conservative thought). His definition of aesthetic experience as one which "represents the world as informed by the values of the observer" is a thoroughly politicized one and one sharply opposed to the tyranny of creator/critic.

Scruton makes a case for the kind of comparative, experiential meaning which arises from reading, seeing and hearing works in relation to each other, rather than to some theoretical norm or ideal. Any resort to feeling is risky and Scruton's argument doesn't disguise the fact that in some way understanding is being forced to make room for myopia, acceptance, authority, received opinion. An anti-intellectual, anti-critical element is smuggled in disguised as Common Reading. Scruton's method, which is exemplary, fails to match up with his political ideals, which are not. Meaning in art, as in anything else, politics included, is not reducible to convention; nor, however, can it be elevated into something metaphysical and unattainable except through "revelation". Scruton locates aesthetics in our responses and then defines criticism prescriptively as "education of response". So far, so good; but in the paper chase of reference and example that follows, he leads us astray, and set to the kind of critical authoritarianism he has set out to debunk; the difference is that Scruton's variety speaks with an English, rather than a French, accent.

Under his gaze, every subject is suffused with

ARTS

Day aftermath

The Day After
ITV, December 10.

The helicopter pilots discuss their plans for the weekend. After a night out with her fiancé, a teenager confronts her father at the foot of the stairs. The doctor's wife tells him, 'e'mun, honey, let's continue this conversation in bed. Kansas City normal, soap-opera style. "For once," my son remarked, "all these clichés are serving a purpose."

Not that the characters had much time to establish themselves: if they had bombed Knuts Landing or Emmerdale Farm, it really would have been shocking. As it was, the one moment of horror came before the blast, when the housewife at an upstairs window paused to take in the implications of the missiles hitting off towards the Soviet Union. She had about 30 minutes while her government responded to what her government had done (or vice versa). "The war is over, mun," said a black soldier, deciding to spend his 30 minutes off duty.

The aftermath was less upsetting, partly because the people had never been real. When I last saw Jason Richards, he was playing President Nixon; now he was a hospital doctor, but nobody seemed to have told him he was one of the good guys this time round. The other reason was simply that television cannot show the full obscenity of nuclear war. It can evoke disaster on a limited scale, with reference to such precedents as *Gone With the Wind*. But as the subsequent discussion in *After The Day After* clearly brought out, if this was ever to happen, it would be much too disturbing for Saturday night viewing. The immediate injuries, the effects of the blast, the burns were hardly suggested, let alone the possibility of a "nuclear winter" in which, after a full-scale exchange, the sun would be blotted out for 12 months, the temperature would fall to minus 23°C, all crops and animals would die, and the remaining insects, that Dark Age is the northern hemisphere would be unlikely to survive.

The doctors, the scientists and even the politicians agreed that the film had understated the case and politically it was less provocative than *The War Game*, barely hinting at the certain breakdown in public order. There was one of the imaginative vision of Peter Watkins' film that led Kenneth Tynan to compare it to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* (while observing that, of course, Michelangelo had been working from data less capable of verification).

In human terms, you could almost feel sorry for Michael Heseltine as he conclusively nuked himself by attacking the film as propaganda and for its impact of hopelessness, while at the same time claiming that it had put the case for deterrence. But this is not a subject on a human scale. The very concept of a balance of terror or "mutually-assured destruction" and the game of "call my bluff" that world leaders play with our survival, have no insanity that makes them impossible to defend in rational terms. The only course available to politicians and experts is the one Heseltine and others adopted the next day in *Weekend World*: to engage in scholastic dispute about "strategic" and "tactical" weapons, "zero options" and suchlike, and to play the numbers game, forgetting that the numbers they are talking about are well above the holocaust level that makes all numbers irrelevant. The only positive thing to say about nuclear weapons is not that they have kept the peace (which is highly debatable), but that they prevent the world with one issue in which the line between good and evil is clearly defined. When the survival of the human race is at stake, we can at least try to get right from wrong and know who our real enemies are.

The news before *Weekend World* (Greenham, Argentina and the Middle East all featured) was less than reassuring and it was followed on Sunday evening by *The Elephant and the Monorail* (C4), an excellent analysis of the high-tech missile defence system. It was a pity that the disquieting tendency of politicians in East and West to view the whole thing as a chess game in which temporary advantages are to be gained and, in Michael Heseltine's case, as the opportunity to make party political broadcasts. In fact, the "logic of deterrence" means that, in present circumstances, any reduction in weapons is likely to be taken by the other side as a sign of weakness or failure of will and the message of all these programmes that the "deterrent" build-up of arms over the past 30 years has made the world a very dangerous place.

Robin Buss

Plotless meander

The Holiday. By Jim Morris.
Liverpool Playhouse, until December 17.

Jim Morris's *Blood on the Dole* was an early success for the current writers-directors regime at the Playhouse. His new play only shows that second success is far harder than first.

Four middle-class girls share a caravan while revelling for O levels (as they talk more like college students they should have little cause for anxiety). Their ambitions are to be authority figures (PE teacher, social security officer, etc.). Along come four lads on the dole and off we go on a plotless meander of crudely funny routines and tired symbols. When the play does go anywhere, it is to the most-visited



Titian's "Tarquin and Lucretia"

Masters from Venice

The Genius of Venice 1500-1600
Royal Academy until March 11, 1984.

Whether "Christ and the Adulteress" is by Giorgione, Titian or someone else fades into insignificance before its brilliantly orchestrated complementary colours of blue-orange and red-green. A sixteenth-century Venetian would probably have used a greater range of hues, but he would have kept these subordinate to his all-important concept of *disegno*. Not the Venetian master of this picture, however. Here, it is colour itself that builds up form and composition, creating a soft-focus light and shade that suggests a more natural atmosphere and mood than ever before.

In Titian's magnificent "Tarquin and Lucretia", painted more than half a century later, the colour-structure is so subtly assembled that every brushstroke registers a shift in the chromatic scale. This is among the greatest of all paintings, and it is easily accessible to anyone with a responsive, intelligent eye. Titian disdains erudite references and goes straight to the point, making

human gesture and a glistening knife clench the dramatic tension of imminent rape.

Great erudition may have gone into the making of this exhibition but as a display of painting, sculpture, drawings and prints it will appeal far beyond the confines of academe. From the still slightly shocking, physical realism of Jacopo Bassano's "Jacob's Journey" to the psychological tension of Lorenzo Lotto's disturbing "Annunciation", the *Genius of Venice* offers an extraordinary range of human experience and artistic expression.

Inevitably, many of the most famous examples of Venetian art have not been allowed to travel. There is not a single reclining nude by Giorgione or Titian and nothing from Tintoretto's thunderous cycle in the Scuola di San Rocco. But with his huge modello for "Paradise" and Veronese's recently restored "Venus and Adonis" and "Cephalus and Procris" reunited for probably the last time, who can complain? It will be a long time before the Royal Academy mounts an exhibition like this again.

Michael Clarke

India note

It is no surprise that Leicestershire, home of the highly commended schools' symphony orchestra, should be the first county to attempt to provide the opportunity for serious study of non-western instruments, in particular the classical instruments of India - the sitar and tabla. Although Indian music is increasingly a part of the music curriculum in primary and secondary schools (not just in Leicestershire), the county music adviser, Peter Fletcher, feels that without the resources and musical expertise devoted to training our children in western orchestral instruments, Indian music will never achieve the status it deserves.

A visit to India, plus grants from Leicestershire County Council and the Gulbenkian Foundation, enabled Mr Fletcher to invite Professor Chaudhuri, Dean of Music at New Delhi University, to spend four months in Leicestershire to launch the project in September of this year. Since then recitals of Indian music (sitar, tabla and voice/harmonium) have been taking place regularly, and over 4,000 children (not just in areas where there is a concentrated Asian population) have enjoyed high quality performances by experts in their field.

Although Leicestershire could be criticized for importing its expertise when there can be no shortage of UK resident sitar and tabla players, nevertheless it must be commended for opening up horizons for Asian children wishing to study their instruments seriously, and bringing authentic Indian music performed to a high standard into large numbers of schools. Currently there are 3 sitar teachers who offer tuition to 60 children (learning individually or in groups); at the time of writing the initial target of 100-150 pupils is some way towards being achieved. Tabla tuition is also offered.

The Loughborough School of Music plans evening courses and it is hoped that as many as 20 pupils will go on to advanced study. Future plans include the purchase of £16,000 worth of instruments so that children can practise at home, and arrangements for quality instruments to be on sale in the proposed classroom pack of materials, including songs and music for Indian instruments, to be produced in collaboration with Keele University.

Further details about the project can be obtained from the Leicestershire School of Music, The Rowans, College Street, Leicester. London teachers can attend a workshop on Indian music next term (February 27) at the ILEA Music Centre as part of the Third World Arts Season. Details and application forms from the Music Centre, Sutherland Street, London SW1.

Philippa Davidson



A pupil from William Harvey School

Reaching out

The project Artsreach has marked the completion of its second year by an exhibition on its home ground, Jackson Lane Community Centre.

The concept was to bring to disabled young people the experience of creative activity through workshops run by skilled artists. It has now reached the units for the handicapped in Harrogate. Students aged from 5 to 16 with a range of physical and mental disabilities have benefited from drama, movement, drawing and painting - activities varying with the skills of

the artists and their perception of needs. The scheme, expanded during its second year, when Capital Radio donated its grant, will continue.

The exhibition of slides, photographs, and individual albums for each group, is by graphics student Steve Kilburn, who has become closely involved with the project. It can be borrowed from Jackson Lane Community Centre, Arkway Road, London N6. 01-340 5226.

Rachel Blake

Digestible chunks

Sociology: A New Approach. Edited by Michael Haralambos.
Cassell Press, Ormskirk. 0 946183 02 3.

It cannot be an easy task writing an introductory text for sociology O level; commercially attractive, perhaps, but intellectually, exceedingly difficult. I would have thought. First, there is the problem which faces all teachers of the subject but which is particularly acute at O level: how to communicate difficult ideas simply while still maintaining some measure of intellectual integrity. Given that some school subjects, such as geography, make admirable attempts to keep abreast of developments in the field at university level, there are good reasons why sociology courses and the texts written for them should do so too. It would be a pity if all that a student took away from his or her O level sociology studies about Karl Marx, for instance, were the notions that religion is the opium of the people, and that the ruling class should be overthrown and replaced by a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Second, there is the problem of scope. Imagine a text, *History: A New Approach* which claimed, just by the boldness of its title, to provide a definitive introductory overview of the subject. What brave soul would tackle Hannibal and the Hapburgs, Manor Houses and Mussolini, Enclosures and the *Exile Cordiale*, not to mention problems of historical methodology, all within the covers of a single volume? No enviable task, this. Sociology, being concerned with the study of the organization of human societies both past and present presents an equally formidable task to the introductory text writer.

Facing a challenge of this magnitude, Michael Haralambos and his colleagues have not done too bad a job at all. The chapters are wide ranging in their focus, from general discussions of culture and socialization, social control and social stratification on the one hand, to more substantive discussions

of the family, education, youth culture and crime, on the other. The text is well balanced, readable, and there are lots of snippets of empirical studies to give the student a feel of the kind of work sociologists actually do. It is a pity though that some of the snippets are not more up to date, and that they are only adapted, simplified versions of the original - reminiscent, in this sense, of those abridged versions of classical literature which uninspired English teachers often gave (and sometimes still give) to their first and second year pupils. If O level English students can cope with the sophistication of some real Dickens, one wonders why O level sociology students could not be acquainted with the elegance of, say, some original Durkheim, too. Nevertheless, these faults apart, the idea of using large chunks of existing research remains a sound one, and I congratulate the authors for it.

My only serious quibble with this book concerns the authors' distinctive claim "to encourage the reader to become actively involved with the material" and "to provide a stimulating and effective learning experience". I think they are unlikely to succeed here. Their hopes on this score are pinned on a series of questions appended to the end of each section. But with only a few exceptions, these questions do not encourage criticism and enquiry; only memorization and regurgitation of what is already contained in the book. Little attempt is made to reach out and make sense of the student's own experience - an opportunity missed if ever there was, when there are topics explicitly devoted to such matters as the family and education. This, though, is no more than the usual sad price of O level - the twisting of highly relevant and powerfully contentious issues into easily digested chunks of memorizable knowledge. We might be a little sad, but we should not be at all surprised that Haralambos and his colleagues have failed to break free of this deeply entrenched tradition.

Andy Hargreaves



What have these got in common: an orange, an adder, and a new? All exotic imports to Britain originally? All characters in Lewis Carroll? No, neither of these: originally they were "norange", "nadder" and "anew".

What happened was that in about the fifteenth century people wrote the indefinite article "a" or "an" as one word with the following noun, such as *anew* (a man) and *anoke* (an oak), and when the two words became separated again they were often wrongly divided, with "a" instead of "an" or "an" instead of "a", as in the three examples here. Here are some more: an umpire was originally "a numpire", an apron was "a napron", a nickname was "an lckname", and aitchbone (that appe-

ting out of beef from the rump) was "a naitchbone", and an auger, the boring tool, was "a nauger". It is even possible that a rummy is so called since he or she was originally "an innocent" person.

You can find evidence of the original nouns in other English or foreign words. The ordinary Spanish word for an orange, for example, is *naranja*, and "et" is another word in English for a newt, so is related to "an ewt". An umpire is someone who is really "non peer" (from the old "umpire"), tied is he is "uneven" ("peer" meaning "equal" here), so is an impartial third party. You can see traces of the original apron in "napkin" and "nap" and a nickname was a name that a person also had (the old word "eke" meaning "also", as modern German *echel*), as for that aitchbone (which some people think was really an "edgebone"), its original form with the *n* can be seen in the anatomical (Latin) term for the buttocks, *nates*.

True, one would have expected the original to have turned into "an orange", since the second letter was a "not". There is a nice story that the

PAPERBACKS

Helbeck of Barnisdale. By Mrs Humphrey Ward. Penguin English Library £2.95. 0 14 043 194 2.

Reprinting *Helbeck of Barnisdale* (published 1898) introduces it to a new readership who, even after all these years, will find it a strong story. Characters are firmly and finely drawn, relationships are emotional and the modern reader has the added interest of noting feminine frustrations - murmurs of the coming women's liberation movement. The savage antagonism between C. de la Helle and Protestant is to many still topical. As in *Wuthering Heights* the countryside and the weather contribute much to the atmosphere. There is a good index.

Enfranchisement of Women. By Harriet Taylor Mill, and The Subjection of Women. By John Stuart Mill. Virago Press £3.50. 0 80066 442 2. These landmarks in the struggle for women's equality need no introduction or justification. The surprise is that, with such champions, it took so long for women to gain property and voting rights. The Mills, wrote three quarters of a century after Mary Woll-



At a Berlin clinic in 1925 and Anastasia with, from the left, Alexis, Mada and Olga in 1910.

Story of an unknown woman

Anastasia. The Life of Anna Anderson.
By Peter Kurth.
Jonathan Cape £10.95. 0 224 02951 7.

On February 17, 1920, an anonymous young woman was admitted to a hospital in Berlin following a suicide attempt. Fifty years later the Supreme Court of West Germany rejected her claim to be Anastasia Nicolaevna, daughter of Tsar Nicholas II, on grounds of insufficient proof. So ended the longest running and most complicated court case this century in Germany. The Anastasia affair is extraordinary in many ways. From the very beginning the "Unknown Woman" (who later became known as Anna Anderson) seemed at times wilfully uncooperative in the matter of establishing her identity. She would not speak Russian, although claiming she could, refused to meet certain Soviet émigrés who might identify her, and

resisted all attempts to make her testify in court. Yet in spite of this, the German court took her case seriously, largely due to the unflagging energies of her most loyal supporters, who devoted many long years and entire personal fortunes to the cause. It was the struggle of this following that persuaded Peter Kurth of the need to re-examine the facts. In his preface he reveals how his initial theories were gradually dispelled and how he came to see Mrs Anderson, not as the object of a deliberate plot by the Romanov family to disinherit her, but rather as the victim of their human failing - of the stubborn pride and deep insecurity of this scattered group of exiles. Aimed with missionary zeal and conviction of a gross miscarriage of justice, the author could have made a direct emotional appeal to his reader. Mr Kurth is, however, well aware of the danger of offending modern sensibilities. In general he allows events to

speak for themselves, describing rather than analysing, and demonstrating proceedings with a scholarly objectivity and no trace of sentimentality. He rarely attempts to justify or condemn the behaviour of his principal characters, and never addresses the reader directly on the identity question.

Anastasia is a complex story of vested interests and political expediency, often overwhelming for a reader trying to create some order from the mass of contradictory "evidence" presented to the author, with little assistance from the author. As the sense of inevitable outcome lessens, dramatic tension is heightened and well maintained throughout the book. There seems little question where the author stands on the issue. It is undoubtedly a measure of his detachment as a biographer that at the end of the book I remained uncertain.

Penny Turnbull

Not a Jesus book

Living in the Time of Jesus of Nazareth.
By Peter Connolly.
Oxford University Press £6.95. 19 918142 X.

In the final balance, *Living in the Time of Jesus of Nazareth* is a valuable and informative book. It looks at the social, domestic and political history of Israel in the hundred years around the ministry of Jesus. It takes into account the findings of current excavations on key archaeological sites and is beautifully illustrated. It would be an asset to almost every secondary religious education course and many Christian preachers and commentators would be more informed if they took the trouble to read it.

However, it is afflicted by that dread disease, the double-page spread. To the left of each spread is a chunk of history, to the right an illustrated feature on a topic such as "Domestic life", "Herod's palace at Jericho" or "The Jordan valley". Sometimes narrative and background coincide

and the eye travels naturally from left to right across the page; other times there is no connection and the reader is distracted by illustrations and maps irrelevant to the main text. It is in practice very difficult to read the book from cover to cover. Added to this, the text infuriatingly confines itself to names and omits topics: it does seem to have been designed for browsing rather than use.

All that said, it makes for fascinating browsing. It is full of useful comments, like just how involved Herod the Great

was with Cleopatra and Mark Antony, how war-torn Palestine was in the time of Jesus and how provocative Pilate was towards the Jews. Peter Connolly is as good on people as he is on places, only occasionally departing from objective reporting of Roman and Hebrew history as, for example, when attempting to chronicle Herod's infatuation: "Herod continued to marry, perhaps in the hope that he might one day find a wife who actually liked him. In the end he had no fewer than nine wives huddled around the palace. From these he produced an interminable string of children."

It is not a book that glosses over the rather pretty eunuchs who attended to Herod's personal needs "on the gory details of what happens to an arm or ankle plucked by a nail during crucifixion" (all details being supported by archaeological evidence found in 1968). The author's own paintings and photographs illustrate the text most graphically.

This is not a Jesus book. Indeed he figures prominently on only five of the book's 96 pages and emerges as a quiet, liberal pacifist oddity out of step with Jewish domestic customs and wildly out of step with the political conviving, murdering and torture that formed part of the everyday life of his country's rulers, both native and Roman. Despite the design problems of the book, it is illuminating and ultimately makes clear sense of a chaotic period of history.

David Self

Funny turn

How To Write Comedy. By Brad Ashlin.
Elm Tree Books £5.95. 0 241 11092 0

Brad Ashlin, who has written jokes for top comedians for more than 30 years, says that comedy can be manufactured. He illustrates this by dissect-

ing jokes to show how they are written. His book, developed from many years of his comedy writing school, covers everything from simple puns to situation comedies, and finishes with lists of television markets, both British and foreign, and agents to approach. While giving instruction in how to amuse, the book itself is fairly technical - showing what hard work comedy is. Cartoons by Nigel Paige are a delight.

Chris Farnes

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EXTRA

Significance for sixth-formers

By Mark Williamson

Most sixth-form tutors would agree that the difficulties of organizing and resourcing a successful sixth-form in recent years have tended to overwhelm such priorities as the creation of a coherent and vigorous General Studies programme which not only preserves a degree of balance between the different curriculum areas but also enables a student to pursue a new interest in some depth and detail.

The acknowledged growth of interest by young people in religion, shown for example by the increasing candidature for external examinations, presents a difficult problem for timetablers and heads of departments alike. However, resources are only one aspect of the problem. There is also the need to construct a course in Religious Studies for post O level GCE students which has both a relevance to the students' questions and interests and which reflects the study of religion as it is now perceived.

Recognizing that teacher contact time may be limited to two or at most three periods a week such a course must combine the need for the intelligible, orderly presentation of material with teaching methods which encourage student participation and discussion.

With almost prophetic insight the University of London GCE Board, introduced in 1975 an Alternative Ordinary Level syllabus which was designed with the needs of sixth-formers and the needs of the subject in mind. The syllabus has proved increasingly popular and the board hopes that the growth in entry for the subject is a recognition that the syllabus as it was originally conceived has a vital role to play in servicing the need

for "continuing religious studies".

Furthermore, although the subject in this case is religious, the skills expected of candidates are those which are being developed across the curriculum and which apply both to "traditional" and "new" sixth-formers - the ability to see the significance of a question, to use relevant information in making a case, to evaluate an argument or point of view and make a personal judgment and to write coherently and effectively.

The syllabus also encourages the development of certain skills which are specific to Religious Studies. For example, the ability to relate the different phenomena of religion (scriptures, beliefs, worship, ethics) to the context of a particular faith, to identify the cultural influences upon religion, to distinguish between and interpret different types of religious texts, to compare and contrast ethical or social problems and to express and evaluate the view taken by a particular faith in religious groups.

Inevitably a syllabus for this target group must offer a range of approaches which permit a teacher to give the course a measure of specificity while retaining a recognition of the universality of religion and its relevance to the contemporary world. The University of London GCE Board has met this need by designing a syllabus in three parts. Candidates are examined in one part only.

Part A (Religious Diversity and Unity) enables the candidates to offer two world faiths selected from Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. There is no restriction on which two religions may be studied so that schools and colleges can

take into account both the work already covered in years one to five and the interests of the candidates themselves.

There is evidence in suggest that candidates are using the syllabus to extend their knowledge of world faiths and, as in the case of Hinduism, to study their own faith with a measure of detachment and objectivity.

Although one cannot altogether disentangle a faith from its historical roots and cultural context the syllabus does concentrate on the beliefs, worship and social ideas of each faith studied as a living religion in the twentieth century.

The syllabus on Judaism, for example, includes "Islam in the modern world". Direct experience of the worship and social customs of religions represented in Britain is to be encouraged and the examiners attempt to set some questions which give scope for candidates to draw upon their own visits, meetings and familiarity with worship and festivals.

The study of religion must inevitably involve a body of knowledge but the general intention is to encourage a "broad brush" treatment of the central issues which the student can use as an opportunity to reflect on and discuss rather than a complex phenomenological analysis which hides the living reality of a religion and its impact on the modern world.

Both the second and the third parts of the syllabus are concerned with the application of religion to life's issues and problems. Part B is entitled "Religious Attitudes in Society" and Part C "Religion and the Meaning of Life". Two-thirds of the syllabus is, therefore, concerned with the influence of religious beliefs on ethical and social

questions and candidates can select a study either of questions affecting society as a whole or questions which are more directly personal.

The Board emphasizes that its approach in setting these questions is broadly "religious" rather than narrowly "Christian" and candidates are expected to have made a study of the teaching of the main religious traditions.

In Part B candidates study two sections chosen from social and international harmony, work, wealth and leisure and law and order. In Part C candidates may concentrate on two of three sections: education and training, love and marriage, and suffering and death.

The growing popularity of this syllabus may well be a result of the board's deliberate weighting of the content in favour of the ethical dimension of religion for candidates who are at a stage when they wish to explore the relevance of religion to world issues and their own personal development.

Religious viewpoints on topical issues are reflected in the papers set. For example, Part B provides for a discussion of civil liberty, censorship of the media, unemployment, strikes, unilateral disarmament and the justification of social and political protest.

The issues in Part C may be described as perennial rather than strictly topical but, like Part B, they reflect the actual concerns or interests of the candidate. Some of the issues included in Part C are religious education in schools, the communication of religious ideas, religion and sexual development, marriage in its social and cultural context, theories about the

meaning of suffering and death and personal survival.

Although RE teachers are likely to be familiar with resources on most of these topics the University of London GCE Board does provide a bibliography which is regularly updated.

There is now a growing recognition that Religious Studies must continue in the sixth-form if students are to receive a balanced general education. A number of specific proposals such as the ill-fated N and F proposals by the Schools Council submitted to the Secretary of State in 1977 have attempted to hold together the needs of the students, the demands of higher education and the integrity, range and rigour of particular subject areas.

It is possible that we will see in the near future renewed attempts to build a new entry gate for higher education which is broader in range than the present system and yet equally effective for the purposes of selection.

Meanwhile attempts to enhance the role of religious studies in the 16-18 curriculum are to be welcomed and the University of London GCE Board's Alternative Ordinary Level syllabus does demonstrate that it is possible to use and develop the concerns and interests of students within a particular subject while preserving generally accepted academic standards.

Mark Williamson is General Education Inspector for Northamptonshire County Council and Chief Examiner for the University of London GCE Board for the Alternative Ordinary Level "Religious Approaches to Modern Life and Thought" - the views expressed are his own.

Can RE cope with religion?

continued

that those who kill and destroy under a Christian flag are the very opposite of what Christians ought to be.

The error here is to give the impression that Christianity's main feature is the proclamation that all people are part of one family. That is not the central point of the Christian message, it does not explain why Christian killers go so far in the opposite direction, and it does not explain why anyone should take seriously a description about mankind which lies in the teeth of the facts of life.

Christianity presents itself as a way of salvation from the evil which seems inescapable from life as we know it. Believing in an afterlife, Christians (note the third person) hold that the hell we see on earth is the permanent and eternal condition of humanity unless, through the mighty acts of God in Jesus Christ, people are saved from it. The alternative, life forever with a Heavenly Father, is glorious beyond our dreams.

This means that Christians will tend to be intolerant of rival outlooks on life will to them tend to look like dangerous frauds. The countervailing force which balances these tendencies is a belief that all mankind needs Christ, who wants all to receive salvation. Extermination of anti-Christians therefore is the opposite of what He wants. Christians ought to express in their lives the love which a saving God has for everyone He has created.

Without the tragic prelude, Christianity will not be correctly presented to young adults. It is highly debatable, however, whether this correct presentation is good for community relations. Nor can we be sure that it will encourage as of first importance the personal detachment needed for an educational view of Christianity.

RE has a choice. Either it suppresses the power of its religious subject matter, or else, like any other subject, it allows the material to mould the educational methods appropriate to teach it. In other words, it may have to stress the word "religious" as strongly as it has grown accustomed to stress "education".

Richard Wilkins was Head of RE at Bushey Hall, Comprehensive, Watford. He is General Secretary of the Association of Christian Teachers.

Saintly and unsaintly

Dictionary of Christian Lore and Legend. By John Medford. Thames and Hudson, £12.50. The Lion Handbook to the Bible. Edited by D and P Alexander. Lion Publishing, £12.95. A New Dictionary of Christian Theology. Edited by A. Richardson and J. Bowden. SCM Press, £19.50. A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality. Edited by G. Wakefield. SCM Press, £15.00.

Since the past is another country, explorers of Christendom need a guide. Professor John Medford's *Dictionary of Christian Lore and Legend* is a study very lively introduction to the medieval Christianity which is buried but still twitching here and there in the ground of fable and legend. It is with us today in phrase, novel, libretto, music, art, monument and cathedral.

The entries start from first principles yet avoid condescension towards the modern browser. Lucid and concise, with no fuss they lead the reader directly from ignorance towards sophistication. Under the heading "Jesus of Nazareth" there is a preliminary assertion that he was the "Founder of Christianity", then there follow two paragraphs deftly describing the main sources for such a statement; finally, there is an alphabetical summary of subsidiary entries, "Abraham" or most people the wrinkled side of 30 have been taught, was "The first of the OT 'Patriarchs'", but by the fifth paragraph we have advanced to the relative obscurity of the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Abraham*. Any one following the asterisk and looking up the further entry "Patriarchs" will rapidly become aware - if he or she is not already - of the need to distinguish this from the edgier "Patriarch". If you find it difficult to resist cross-references, this dictionary gives plenty of scope for wild goose chases.

"Gouse"? This is a "symbol of vigilance", but on the other hand "geese listening to a fox preaching, on a misheard, represent credulous people being duped by a false friar".

This guide for the non-specialist unravels part of that full tapestry of saintly and unsaintly life that was so essential to the medieval imagination.

Geoffrey Ahernt

Assessing the affective and the spiritual

Howard Marratt on new possibilities in RE at 16-plus

Whatever the Secretaries of State decide about a common examination system at 16-plus, the flurry of activity in working parties cannot but influence the approach of examiners (and syllabus-makers) to the form and content of secondary school examinations. This influence may also be a delayed but logical climax to the impact of theories of child development and of curriculum objectives on the philosophy and structure of religious education. In other words, the educational concerns which have stimulated curriculum development in secondary schools will now begin to influence examinations at 16-plus rather than to be constricted by examination syllabuses and systems.

The HMI Working Papers (*Curriculum 11 to 16*, DES, 1977) and *The School Curriculum* (DES 1981), by which local authorities are encouraged to "test their curricular policies and their application to individual schools" (para 12, op cit) reflect those moves in religious education which must now be applied to examinations: realism about cognitive and affective factors, the identification of forms of knowledge and realms of meaning, flexibility in the definition of religion, growing interest in skills and abilities, the impact of the social context, a concern for values in personal and social education, and a respect for commitments and for the commitment of others. If these factors are enshrined in primary and early secondary religious education, they ought also to feature in any formal examination system.

Teachers of religious education, therefore, must be aware that they will have to prepare pupils for an examination which assesses skills as much as, if not more than, knowledge. The emphasis on religious understanding in public statements about religious education will now find expression in examination papers which, whatever the syllabus, test pupils' understanding of the nature and practice of religion, instead of merely assessing their ability to re-call biblical and post-biblical material.

Moreover, the initial attempt to identify a core of knowledge as a basis for a common examination has been abandoned, partly because of philosophical and educational reasons but also because of the constraints peculiar to this subject. Not only does the use, in any region, of different Agreed Syllabuses provide an uneasy basis in years 1 to 3 for a common core of examination work, but there are the resource constraints of staff expertise and available materials. Any economic

approach is that neither narrowness nor breadth of content is a guarantee of understanding of religion. The aims and objectives of the proposals for religious studies make it clear that pupils are to be introduced not merely to the challenging but also the varied nature of religion and its reflection in practice.

Teachers are to promote not only a sympathetic but also an enquiring approach to the study of religion; and candidates will be assessed on the principal beliefs of the religion(s) studied and on a "religious and, where appropriate, non-religious responses to contemporary moral issues". Now this means that any question - whether starting with textual material on the Good Samaritan or with stimulus material from a newspaper report or a cartoon - must assess the pupils' ability to understand the position and actions of a variety of people (ritualist priests as well as everyday Samaritans) and, in relation to this example, if requested, articulate the beliefs of the religion(s) involved with regard to suffering or prejudice or forgiveness or practical almsgiving.

Until the specimen papers for a common examination are seen and developed, this may appear as an impossible task. But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is not merely a test of cognition; it is just as much an assessment of the realm of the affective and the spiritual which is not necessarily related to a pupils' IQ. What it will require of teachers will be a careful handling of two aspects: the self-identity of pupils who, personally or because of their religious tradition (or lack of it), feel isolated or threatened when dealing with such objectives or such an objective approach.

The other aspect is the need to give candidates a lot of experience in transferring from one situation or text or area or medium to another. But this is between questions (as distinct from a compulsory set of questions which test some or all of the objectives), each question must test all the objectives.

This will require the breakdown of questions (and of marking stresses) into subsections which may stress particular aspects of the overall objectives - which themselves are weighted in broad bands of 35 to 45 per cent each for both knowledge and understanding, and 15 to 25 per cent for evaluation. Each question, therefore, may be divided into sub-sections which test different (or the same) objectives and allow for one word, one sentence or short essay responses.

The second reason for the different approach is that neither narrowness

constraints will, hopefully, be tempered by the willingness of head teachers to allocate to religious studies for 16-plus the same hours as for history or geography - and even to compensate for any lack of comparability with those subjects in the lower school, which could disadvantage candidates in religious education as they tackle a formally-assessed curriculum.

Assessment objectives are normally classified under three headings: knowledge, understanding and evaluation. Obviously, any syllabus which concentrates on skills and discourages the acquisition of knowledge would be a disservice to pupils as well as to colleagues in other subjects. But there may be a reduction in the marks awarded for merely factual re-call.

It is more likely that the examination will test the selection and organized presentation of the "facts" (events, practices, statements, texts, etc); as every examiner knows, most pupils score badly because they fail to read the question and, therefore, provide material which is correct but irrelevant to the question set. It would be no bad thing if we produced a generation of people who could see through the propensity of religious leaders to answer the questions which people were not asking! And although the examination will have to meet the needs of a wide range of ability it will also provide scope for the third objective - namely the "evaluation" of religious answers and insights.

It is in regard to the second objective of "understanding" that one may hope that the examination papers in a common 16-plus system will reflect a different approach from the current contents of most GCE and CSE examinations in religious studies.

There are two reasons for this: first, since all pupils are to be assessed in relation to all the objectives, it follows that if they are to be given a free choice between questions (as distinct from a compulsory set of questions which test some or all of the objectives), each question must test all the objectives. This will require the breakdown of questions (and of marking stresses) into subsections which may stress particular aspects of the overall objectives - which themselves are weighted in broad bands of 35 to 45 per cent each for both knowledge and understanding, and 15 to 25 per cent for evaluation. Each question, therefore, may be divided into sub-sections which test different (or the same) objectives and allow for one word, one sentence or short essay responses.

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Teachers are to promote not only a sympathetic but also an enquiring approach to the study of religion; and candidates will be assessed on the principal beliefs of the religion(s) studied and on a "religious and, where appropriate, non-religious responses to contemporary moral issues". Now this means that any question - whether starting with textual material on the Good Samaritan or with stimulus material from a newspaper report or a cartoon - must assess the pupils' ability to understand the position and actions of a variety of people (ritualist priests as well as everyday Samaritans) and, in relation to this example, if requested, articulate the beliefs of the religion(s) involved with regard to suffering or prejudice or forgiveness or practical almsgiving.

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Photo: Sally & Richard Greenhill

Damp offering

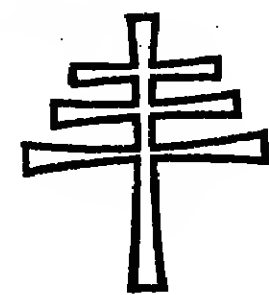
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The full colour cartoons are fun. Jonah's fish is a fish and not a whale as it so often is mistakenly represented, and in the Garden of Eden the flowa pop up just where they are needed to preserve everyone's modesty. That said, the text is distinctly damp if not downright wet and at £4.95 the pack is really suitable only for those with more money than faith.

David Self

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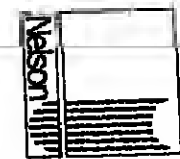
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EXTRA

Infant possibilities

By Dora Ainsworth

The generally accepted view among teachers of the under eights is that explicit religious education is neither possible nor desirable. It is held that young children are not intellectually "ready" for anything as abstract as religion. Most of the compilers of Agreed syllabuses also share this view.

If one questions this assumption one's attention is normally drawn to the psychology of Piaget. It is pointed out that according to Piaget's findings, young children at the intuitive stage of development are capable only of dealing with the immediate and concrete and since they cannot conceive even simple mathematical concepts even when accompanied by concrete practical experience they cannot be expected to make any sense of religious ideas.

The accepted approach is to arrange activities and experience which will incorporate implicit religious experience. Then by the time the child is well advanced in the concrete or formal stage of reasoning, explicit religious education can be given and because of the implicit prior experience will be more meaningful.

I find this view of both young children's capacities and the educational implications suspect on both psychological and professional grounds. Psychologically because this stage restricted view of children's capacities, perhaps underestimates their true abilities.

Recent investigations point to this; Margaret Donaldson's work shows that young children's thinking is far less limited than Piaget's findings suggest. She found that the formal clinical presentation of tasks of Piaget obscured children's real abilities. When children can make "human sense" out of a situation they can deal with it more competently. When the same tasks are presented in familiar contexts and related to their everyday experience, they are typically successful.

One example she gives is a task testing children's understanding of the inclusion of a subset within a set. The task asks children to say of a set of five toy cows in which four are black and one is white whether there are more cows or black cows. Children at the intuitive stage cannot usually answer

correctly. However, Donaldson found that if four of the cows were turned onto their sides and the children told that these cows were tired and had gone to sleep and the standing cow was not sleeping so he was still awake the same children when asked the question are there more cows or sleeping cows could answer correctly. They had made "human sense" of the situation.

She goes on to explain that in other tasks apparently irrational answers given by children are frequently examples not of inability to think logically but simply of lack of appropriate experience-linked language. She illustrates this point by reference to a story-based task in which children are required to listen to a story about a seaside walk along a quay and to illustrate it. Frequently, young children respond by drawing pictures of people walking along a quay rather than a quay. This she claims is not because the children really believed that people walk along quays but because this was a story and anything can happen in a story. They were using their experience of stories and of the only kind of

Joan Tough also finds the Piaget-influenced view of children's thinking too limited. She finds that five-year-old children given adequate language-linked experiences are not tied to the immediate as Piagetians hold, but can use past experience to predict the future. She also finds that children with the richest language background show these powers to the greatest extent.

Jerome Bruner from an extensive study of children would concur with this point. He maintains that language is the main tool of intellectual development and that "once language becomes a medium for the translation of experience there is a progressive release from immediacy."

The common finding from the above studies is that children's intellectual development factors but is influenced and extended by experience and language. Educationally, I think that the decision to rely upon implicit religious education is unsatisfactory because the children are not offered any clear starting points for their thinking in this area.

A parallel might be to offer only

implicit mathematics leaving serious teaching to a later stage. This would be regarded as ludicrous for children only arrive at mathematical concepts by engaging in activities which lead them to acquire such concepts which it is argued will not have to be unlearned as the child matures.

I would argue that the same applies to religious concepts. Jerome Bruner once said that "the best introduction to a subject is participation in that subject". He is convinced that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development." He holds that there is no evidence to

contradict this view and that considerable evidence is being gathered to support it.

The difficulty for the practising teacher is in finding the "intellectually honest form" to present religious topics to children. This problem

causes many teachers to feel that they are not doing their best for their children and because of this play for safety by avoiding direct religious teaching. It is sometimes forgotten that by doing this they may be just as seriously conditioning the children's attitude to religion. We have all become accustomed to the notion of the "hidden curriculum" but perhaps may not have considered the effects of the "null curriculum" (Elliot Eisner) that is the effect of excluding a study from the curriculum. In so doing the child is deprived of the opportunity to grow in understanding of the study simply by not knowing of its existence. M C Braver studying both adults and children in Algeria found "that the lack of pressure to use a particular type of concept" (in childhood) "led to unstable adult learning in this area."

But an honest form can be found. The examples of the Nuffield 5-11 projects in mathematics and the Schools Council Science 5-13 can be helpful in this respect. Both these projects provide activities which are closely linked with the subject vocabulary. Children at an early stage are helped to acquire the language of mathematics and science and gradually to begin to develop appropriate concepts through acquired language-linked experience. An intellectually honest form of religious education must enable the children to learn the language of religion and gradually to come to terms with religious concepts.

Ralph Gover in *Religious Education in the Infant Years* points out that children at the infant level are not devoid of religious experience when they enter the infant school. He says that religious concepts develop "because first crude ideas have been refined. What is needed is not a waiting for readiness but teachers who are skilled in refining concepts."

This would imply that teachers might need to use individual and group teaching approaches rather than whole class methods to allow opportunity for this refining process to occur. As all teachers of this age group know, young children constantly ask questions about everything in their environment and this tendency can be harnessed to help children to explore religious ideas. Children need to be presented with situations which stimulate questions and be helped to consider some of the answers.

In practical terms, explicit religious

teaching will not be far removed from what is currently called implicit. It will simply involve assisting the children to become aware of the religious dimension. According to many Agreed syllabuses a pre-religious experience held to be important for subsequent religious understanding is the experience of awe. It is true that alone this feeling is valuable for later education in different areas of the curriculum including religion. But if the experience is deepened by assisting children to consider possible reasons for this feeling then they will be assisted to begin the spiral which leads to a mature understanding of religion necessary for the educated person.

Natural phenomena or pictures of the same are frequently used as source material. Allowing the children to absorb the beauty is sometimes held to be enough at this stage. But the experience can become more educational if the children are encouraged, for instance, to relate the beauty of natural objects to that of man-made art-

work. The problem for the four of us concerned was to establish a self-contained theme, to last one week, which is flexible enough for our curriculum needs, while at once stimulating, motivating and uniting the children of the two classes involved. Our solution was to combine Genesis and *Close Encounters*... with the aim of encouraging a careful observation of the natural world.

Our walk on the first evening in the darkness of the grounds, ("if we're lucky we might hear an owl") was turned, with the expertise of a willing brother, armed with concealed loudspeakers, slide-projectors and a huge gauze suspended between trees, into an extra-terrestrial experience.

The benevolent visitors urged the children to look at what man has done to the world since he first lived, and to learn to love everything around them, adding that "your fathers have failed and your grandfathers have failed."

Once back in the warmth of the Hall we discussed the many accounts of how the world came into being with the children, who returned to the familiar story of Genesis. We "decided" to follow our framework for the world as man found it.

On the following day the party split into four groups and started investigations. Two groups chose to investigate darkness and light, ("... God divided the light from the darkness"), the first visiting a cave to experience, probably for the first time, absolute darkness. The cold and damp helped conjure up a world without sun. The second group in the meantime, also armed with clipboards and notebooks, were investigating tunnels in and around the Hall grounds, and noting the effects of light and darkness on comparative growth of plant life.

On the same day another group investigated soils, ("... let dry land appear"), and the influence of its properties on the variety and abundance of vegetation. At the same time the fourth group examined the seeds and fruit of the trees in the grounds, ("... bring forth grass the herb yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit").

Each of the groups on their return immediately set about recording their findings and experiences, some in writing, some to music, others mathematically, some in paint or chalk or clay, while others carried out scientific investigations on samples collected. The stimulus was strong; the theme had taken its grip and the children continued until their bedtime. The staff continued into the early hours, so that completed work was mounted for display, knowing that the morning would bring fresh areas of exploration.

Footnotes:
1 Donaldson, Margaret, *Children's Minds* 1978 Fontana, Croom Helm
2 Ibid page 44
3 Ibid pages 23, 76, 121
4 Ibid page 71
5 Tough, Jenn, *The Development of Meaning* 1977 Allen & Unwin pp 107-127
6 Bruner, Jerome S *Beyond the Information Given* 1976 Allen and Unwin, page 349
7 Ibid page 413
8 Eisner, Elliot, comment made during *Aesthetics in Education* conference at Manchester Polytechnic Sept 1980
9 Bovey, M C *Culture and Cognition* 1974 Methuen page 332 Edited by J W Berry and P R Dason
10 Nuffield Foundation, *Mathematics 5-11* Longmans 1979
11 Schools Council, *Science 5-13* Mac Donald Educ, 1974
12 Gover, Ralph, *Religious Education in the Infant Years* 1982 Lion Publications page 46

Dora Ainsworth was formerly principal lecturer in Education, Manchester Polytechnic.

Thematic approach

By Michael Ford with Margaret Dudley, Maggie Whincup and Maureen Pollard

Although the building which houses us is described by the local authority as "of indeterminate age", Russell Hall, as a 5 to 9 first school, is only in its sixth year. The main thread of our development in that time through high commitment to in-service training, through discussions at staff meetings and subsequent changes in classroom practice, has been towards the establishing of an agreed, clearly understood and comprehensive body of curriculum aims. Although clearly defined, these ingredients are most palatable and most easily digested when well blended, and so it is within a thematic approach that most classroom activities are framed.

Over the past four years we have been fortunate enough to make residential visits with our oldest children to Ingleborough Hall, an outdoor education centre in the Yorkshire Dales, funded by Bradford, Leeds, Kirkstall and Wakefield authorities. We take to the Hall, with the support of its permanent staff, this thematic, curriculum-centred approach, rather than "pursuits-based" activities, which have been more prevalent.

The problem for the four of us concerned was to establish a self-contained theme, to last one week, which is flexible enough for our curriculum needs, while at once stimulating, motivating and uniting the children of the two classes involved. Our solution was to combine Genesis and *Close Encounters*... with the aim of encouraging a careful observation of the natural world.

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Thematic approach

The third day saw re-shuffled groups set out again. One group looked at colonization, ("... the earth brought forth grass"), and logged the prevalence of forms of life in reclaiming land from man, in the ruined stable block and overgrown memorial garden. Another, remembering how darkness had meant absence of colour, examined autumn tints in the woods, ("let them be signs for the seasons").

The third and fourth groups examined trees, ("... the tree yielding fruit"), and birds, ("... winged fowl after its kind"), from the ducks on the back to the poultry in the Hall grounds. The quality of the children's observations, and the abundance of their recording had by now multiplied.

Thursday was our final full working day, and once again the party divided. We have found that this pattern, with the smaller groups re-uniting in the evening to report back on respective activities, most successful. The first group visited two quarries, one a working quarry, to examine man's impact on nature, ("... let us make men... [to] have dominion over all the earth"), and the second an aban-

doned one, where the process of re-colonization is clear. Back in the immediate environment of the hall, a group was carefully collecting and preparing edible seeds and fruits, ("... to you it shall be for meat"), which would form attractive side dishes to the evening's barbecue. The final two groups examined life in water, ("let the waters bring forth... the moving creature that hath life"), comparing finds in lake, stream, fountain and rainbut, and searched for "minibeasts", ("... creeping thing"), and their habitats.

Friday brought our return to school, and a little time in which to reflect on the week's activities. Was it educationally valid? Without doubt. Was it exhausting? Absolutely. But was it anything at all to do with RE? Well, certainly our treatment of Genesis, as just one of the stories by which men tried to come to terms with creation, would not please the Fundamentalists, and there was precious little formal hymn-singing and prayer saying about it but, if, like us, your RE syllabus includes aims such as "enjoying the wonder of being alive" and "delighting on the rich variety of the world", you may feel that in some small way we had helped each child to become one who "looks through Nature, up to Nature's God". (Pope)

Video initiative

By Ray Bruce

The use of video is fast becoming an established educational practice which provides new opportunities for improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning. CEM Video has been set up to explore and develop the potential of video technology in the fields of religious, moral and multicultural education.

While serving as the secondary teacher adviser in RE for the Inner London Education Authority, a great deal of my time was spent in responding to requests for material and resources which would engage the interests of the pupils and, at the same time, promote the image of the subject. If pupils are coming to face with the video boom at home and in other subject areas at school, then it is important for the credibility and status of RE that we are able to match what is on offer.

I do not believe for one moment that the development of video technology with specific reference to RE will be the universal cure for all the ills that beset the subject, given its minority or Cinderella status. However, I do feel that the development of video material, along with the expertise that goes with its use, will benefit the subject by improving its status as well as allowing curriculum innovation in an area where this can be sporadic.

Agreed syllabus suggestions and schemes of work produced by teachers reflect the concern to promote and communicate religious expression through the way it is practised in the differing faith traditions. This important "visible" aspect of religion means that there is a need for teachers to have access to professionally produced material which provides such information. It is not always easy for teachers to visit a mosque or a synagogue, for example, yet it is important that RE is not simply tied down to text-books.

There are many colleagues who, for a variety of reasons, are not out of faith with world religions but feel the need to "go international". They require basic information in visual form to accomplish such development. CEM Video is providing a series of "Religion through the eyes of children" which seeks to explore the basic beliefs and practices of youngsters who are part of a particular faith tradition. The first in the series introduces Islam to the middle and lower secondary age range.

Provision for good video class material that reflects development and innovation in RE has implications for teachers themselves. To what extent can their own level of expertise and professional development meet the challenge of new content and teaching methods? The lack of real advisory provision in a number of authorities and inadequate in-service facilities pre-

sent real problems for the RE teacher, particularly those who run a solo operation.

The production and circulation of video material can provide an in-service resource which communicates examples of good practice in methods of teaching as well as an up-dating on information and resources, such as the CEM Video's Research Magazine. Such a service is particularly required in the primary field where there is a need for the training of RE consultants to service the subject in a particular school.

The availability of portable video equipment and some knowledge of its use will enable teachers to embark on local project work. Religious trails, the local church and other places of religious interest can become the focus of video work for both pupils and teachers. Project work where pupils research some aspect of religious interest, script a programme and make a simple video can engage the interest of pupils as well as providing a context for some valuable RE work.

Developing sufficient expertise to embark upon such a venture does not demand a great deal of "knowhow". It obviously becomes more sophisticated as the interest and commitment of the teacher grows. It is important that teachers wishing to use video have access to information and guidance to help them undertake work of their own.

I have already received a number of letters requesting information relating to specific problems that colleagues have come across in their own video work. This has prompted CEM Video to look into the possibility of some sort of studio centre where teachers interested in using video can attend and learn something of this new technology.

CEM Video is concerned to produce appropriate video material and provide a channel of communication for all those RE teachers interested in initiating and developing video work. CEM Video is an initiative of the Christian Education Movement. CEM provides a forum for curriculum development, in-service training and resource material; it is the ecumenical and professional body concerned with RE at all levels of education.

We are keen to hear from colleagues who have ideas about possible video material and those who might be interested in learning about the use of video.

Ray Bruce is an experienced teacher and writer in the RE field who has just finished two years as the ILEA secondary teacher adviser in RE. He is production director of CEM Video.

EXTRA

Breaking the silence

Christine Trevett on sex-role stereotyping in RE

The subject of sex-role stereotyping has occupied many pages in educational publications of recent years. Just as some time ago educationalists and publishers were being accused of failure to respond to the needs of a multi-cultural, multi-religious society, so now they are being made aware of their own sexist presuppositions and the effects of these on the curriculum and children's performances.

In one subject, in particular, the problem of stereotyping is exacerbated by the fact that within it, as within the sources used to teach it, there is firmly established and entrenched a view of the nature and roles of the sexes. Indeed, some radical feminists have argued that its very *raison d'être* should be seen to be the determination and perpetuation of male supremacy and the patriarchal order. That subject is religion.

The past 20 years have brought something of a revolution in religious studies. As very many schools have worked hard to meet the challenges of a changing society and of multi-faith classrooms so have textbooks on religious studies and Christian studies proliferated. Regional Agreed Syllabuses for Religious Studies and source books for teachers indicate that examples need not be white or Christian and as there has emerged an emphasis on the universal character of religion and of religious experience so have Christianity and scripture come less to dominate the curriculum. Though it is a partial one, this has been the first revolution in the teaching of religion.

The second revolution is yet to begin. There is, as yet, little indication that the insights of feminism (religious or otherwise) and of the theology of liberation have touched the religious studies classroom. So unquestioning in their presentation of women and hence, by implication, of men are the writers and publishers of two-way textbooks in this subject that they go beyond even the usual stereotypes of women as passive recipients of humble enableers.

There is, rather, the eradication of references to women, as evidenced not only by means of the ubiquitous "he" and "his" which render them invisible but also by citing only the male versions of religious terms and titles and through the illustrations which so often do not feature them. It is silence concerning women with characterizes their treatment in too many books for schools. Such silence, in its turn, will serve in determining the self-image of members of both sexes.

Like women in the pews, girls predominate in examination classes in religion. Very many teachers of the subject are women (as advisers they are less in evidence). They, like the men, are perhaps unaware that the materials which have traditionally formed the basis for teaching religion, and the manner in which such materials have been presented, are now being examined critically.

Some writers have come to regard the Scriptures and traditions of religions as part of that mechanism which determines of women, women's limited hopes for themselves and the constraints which men experience also.

Hence, in Christianity and in other faiths in recent years, has come a questioning of long-held assumptions, with the language of theology being reappraised and a new language forged. This offers a challenge to all, whether teachers or pupils in the school, teachers, too, involved in the school "act of worship" or those who believe that all language, even religious language, used in schools should be scrutinized carefully.

The suggestion, for example, that the liturgical repetition of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit may prove less helpful to many worshippers than, say, appeal to the God who creates, redeems and sustains is deserving of consideration. For in attempting to promote in both sexes an understanding of or even a positive response to the claims of religions, we do also take into account: the de-feminization which has occurred within them; the need of both sexes to have role-models, and the fact that it is not helpful to present religion and religious experience as a

universal phenomenon while ignoring the experience of half of humankind, limited though it may be. Such limitations themselves deserve explanation. There is a case, I believe, for looking



afraid at what is said (and is not said) in the religious studies classroom concerning the nature and roles of the sexes. In so doing, the primary sources for religious study (that is, scriptures, significant non-canonical sources, practitioners of religions invited to schools) need to be considered carefully. Such consideration involves dealing with our own presuppositions, some of which will have been occasioned by religion itself. The process is not an easy one. But a wealth of published material on the current debate is available for those who wish to seek its implications for the educator.

So far as sexism and the religious studies classroom is concerned, American literature is ahead of our own and is not easy to obtain. But as for the language of religion, its patriarchy, de-feminization and the denigration of women, the nature and status of each of the sexes as defined in religions, these and other aspects of the debate figure in a variety of books.

There is the passionately argued radical rejection of religion by Mary Daly in *Beyond God the Father*, in *The Church and the Second Sex* and in *Gyn-Ecology: the Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (this last from The Women's Press, 1979). Written from within the religious field is the often moving *Dispossessed Daughters of Eve: faith and feminism* (SCM Press, 1981) by Susan Duwell and Lynn Hurrenrich and from America have come the many works of Rosemary Radford Ruether, including *New Woman New Earth: sexist ideologies and human liberation* (Seabury Press, New York, 1975).

The raising of consciousness in teachers, lecturers, publishers and the like is only a first step. The laudable calls of recent years for objectivity and honesty in approaching religious traditions need to apply also to honesty in discussing the nature and status of the sexes as religions have defined them.

And teachers who can acknowledge the sexism inherent in the language, assumptions and teaching materials of other subjects may indeed find it painful or objectionable even to consider its existence in religions and religious studies. The recognition of such difficulties is part of the process.

Dr Christine Trevett is a member of the Board of Studies for Religious Studies, University College, Cardiff.

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RESOURCES

notes

CES SHIFTS TO ACORN

ICL's Computer in Education In School Project, which produces courses for computer studies, has been transferred to Acorn Computers, manufacturers of the BBC Micro and allied software.

Among materials produced by the Project are a CSE and GCE computer studies course, which includes software simulations of several computer applications, and 'Living with Computers', which consists of a series of books, software and activity sheets for information technology courses for 11 to 13-year-olds.

CES expect their Newsletter, their regional advisory panels' assistance with in-service training courses and other activities to continue. CES are now based at Acorn CES, The Hermitage, Bath Road, Trowell, Leicestershire, LE11 6OAR.

OLD VIC

Following its successful audiocassette histories about Kings and Queens, Shakespeare, and Westminster Abbey, Soundcraft has now produced a cassette telling the story of The Old Vic, from an industrial dispute on the opening night in 1818 to the present day.

The cassette lasts 92 minutes and is in stereo. It features Judi Dench and Robert Hardy as some of the leading personalities, as well as Sir John Gielgud's personal reminiscences and an archive recording of Lillian Baylis. It makes fascinating listening to any student of the theatre.

Priced £4.45, it will be available in record shops from January or by post now from The Old Vic, Waterloo Road, London SE1 (post and packing 30p).

Interactive epic

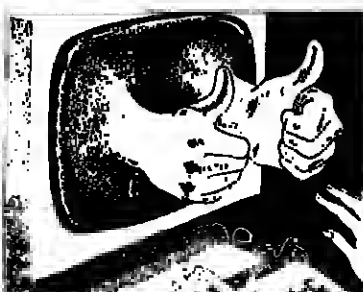
In the developing story of interactive video, Jacquetta Megarry reports on a recent conference on the state of the technology

EPIC's Third Annual Interactive Technology Briefing took place last week before an audience of presenters and 140 delegates packed out the conference centre for two days. It provided an efficiently run and well-documented opportunity to take stock of the state of interactive video.

Many of the speakers were clearly hardware enthusiasts, and some of the presentations were strong on whizz-bang pyrotechnics, weak on strategic and educational thinking. There can be few fields where the technology has so far outstripped our capacity to apply it wisely.

The discs developed so far mainly apply the technique to marketing, sales or archiving. Of those speakers who were using interactive technology for training, several seemed trapped within the assumptions traditional to programmed learning in the 1960s: video snippets are followed by multiple-choice questions with pre-determined routing to the next snippet dependent on the trainee's response or response history. Several speakers stressed the importance of sequence on the master disc, as if there was a single and predictable best route.

The only mainstream educational material on show was the delightful *Start Here: Adventures into Science* series developed by Peter Morley, the award-winning documentary programme maker. Although produced for Thorn-EMI's new VHD videodisc, the programmes have also been transmitted in "linear" form by Channel 4, where they attracted unprecedented audience reaction. Each programme sequence is followed by a reference section which functions like an animated visual encyclopaedia. The



videodisc is currently being evaluated in five London primary schools by an independent team from North East London Polytechnic headed by Colin Mabley of the School of Education and Humanities.

The potential significance of this experiment is considerable. It is based on the newly-arrived VHD system (see Barry Fox's article *TES*, December 2), which represents the first real alternative to the high-cost hardware-driven approach of Philips LaserVision, and seems much more likely than Philips to respond to the needs of the education system. The possibility of low-cost entry into the videodisc player market means that more educational institutions can embark on the learning curve.

A college with access to a suitable videodisc material would only have to spend £500 or so to start experimenting with full microcomputer control of the VHD disc player. If the college had suitable video material to an acceptable standard and good editing facilities, it would need only a further two or three thousand pounds to dabble in interactive videodisc production.

There is not likely to be a rush to dabble, however, unless some enlight-

ened agency is willing to take a risk. The problem is intractable: there is hardly any material on disc that is suitable for British curricula and British colour standards.

Developing such material is expensive and needs specialized skills. No one is likely to commit enough time and money to such a project unless they know which system to standardize on, and are confident that there will be a market for their products. The whole area is a minefield of incompatibilities, that both includes and overshadows the compatibility problems of microcomputers. The lack of discs will continue to inhibit the experimentation without which educationalists will never grasp the medium's potential.

Interesting work at the Open University has been done using existing videotape, as Diana Laurillard explained (*TES*, October 21). Useful though videotape may be as a temporary medium for experimentation, it has important practical limitations for exploiting the interactive potential. In any case, ideally video material would be shot specially for interactive use, and then the video production costs will probably outweigh the disc mastering costs.

As videodisc player and mastering costs come down, the days of videotape must surely be numbered. In the meantime whatever the pros and cons of capacitance versus optical discs (and these are finely balanced, depending on the application), the technology is moving so fast that the relative advantage could change or both systems might be superseded. Meanwhile, it is urgent that educators should develop some expertise and the capacity to identify and publicize their needs to the manufacturers.

Carolyn O'Grady

Catalogue

Griffin and George, suppliers of scientific equipment for schools, have produced their first computer catalogue containing information on hardware, software, accessories and interfaces.

Griffin supply the Sinclair ZX80, ZX81 and ZX Spectrum microcomputers together with the BBC Micro, Acorn Electron and the Dragon 32. Interfaces and accessories include a desk console designed to hold the computers, a 16K memory expansion box, printer, power supply unit, cassette recorder and pencils.

There is also a Centronics interface which enables the Spectrum to be linked to a full-width printer for word processing (the Sinclair printer is too narrow for this purpose), and the general purpose I-Pack interface for the Spectrum and BBC Micro which is supplied with software. The interface can be used for monitoring experiments where the equipment has an analogue voltage. Any analogue voltage between 0V and +2.55V can be converted into digital form.

Also included in the catalogue is the Griffin Robotic Arm described as a low-cost (£434.00), ready built arm which has five axes of rotation: base, shoulder, elbow, wrist and three finger grippers. Accompanying software is available for the most widely used microcomputers.

The Zeaker Turtle is a battery-operated box-like robot (costing £119) which has two separately driven wheels, and touch sensors to indicate if the turtle has collided with other objects. It also has a retractable pen which can trace its path on a sheet of paper.

Among colour monitors and televisions is the CRB-529-010K, 26-inch remote control television which can be used with a video recorder and computer to give a Griffin-outstandingly good resolution with each. They claim that it would be particularly useful to primary schools where one television is used for many purposes.

Carolyn O'Grady

A good story

At another "educational" level, the writer is bristling with questions about his art ("which came first, the story or the people?") and about social problems. He inveighs against the oppression of the poor; he fumes over the paucity of schooling and the absence of effective public sanitation. He talks happily of his delight in swaying audiences, his fascination with the mentality of criminals and his detestation of public executions.

This Dickens, is remarkably convincing. All that is lacking is that luminosity of gaze which those who met the original always remarked upon. Some of the scenes from the novel are as vivid as the best of the BBC's classic adaptations for Sunday afternoon, which is saying a lot. Maria Charles's Miss Havisham, with cadaverous face, manic eyes, and cobwebs like accretions to her wedding dress, is unimprovable;

Michael Church

Citizen 2000

Mary Hoffman reviews this year's contribution to a series that will run until the year 2000



The production team are anxious to avoid stereotyping their families, though, and concentrate on the personal experience of the mothers, the conflict or balance between the baby's needs and their own needs, financial or otherwise.

The last of the present batch of *Citizen 2000* programmes goes out on January 8, when Aidan McFarlane will talk with all the parents of the 15 one-year-olds. That will give the Dads, who were so impressively caring and involved with their babies in the introductory programme, another chance to influence the nation in equal roles. Let's hope the citizens of 2000 won't need that.

briefings

radio & tv

Christmas highlights for children

LISTENING CORNER
(Monday-Friday 13.55, VHF 4)
This series continues through the holiday with Frankie Howard telling stories of Mr Loopy and Mrs Snoopy to very young listeners.

JACKANORY
(Monday-Friday 16.45, BBC1)
Jan Francis returns to "Jackanory" to read the story version of J.M. Barrie's play "Peter Pan".

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER
(Boxing Day 12.30, C4)
1938 film of the Mark Twain adventure story produced by David O. Selznick with Tommy Kelly as Tom Sawyer.

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
(Tuesday, December 27 17.30, ITV)
Described as a meticulous re-creation of Kenneth Grahame's classic, this film by Cosgrove Hall uses sophisticated animation technique. It could be a highspot for many children this Christmas.

SILAS MARNER
(Tuesday, December 27 18.45, C4)
To follow up the success of last Christmas's "The Snowman" (repeated on C4 on December 29), Channel 4 has commissioned a new animated film from prize-winning British animator, Alison de Vere.

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN
(Tuesday, December 27 10.35, C4)
1939 screen version of the Mark Twain classic starring Mickey Rooney.

BLUE PETER REVIEW OF THE YEAR
(Thursday, December 29 17.10, BBC1)
A look back at the year with interviews with Torville and Dean and a Margaret Thatcher voice-alike.

THE SOOTY STORY
(Thursday, December 29 16.45, ITV)
Documentary on Sooty's 33 years in show biz, beginning with his discovery in a second-hand shop by Harry Corbett.

FORTRESS FALKLANDS - A CHILD'S EYE VIEW
(Friday 30 16.45, ITV)
Documentary on the lives of Falklands children and the effects of the war.

FAMILY TREES
(Wednesday, January 4 17.15, ITV)
Start of 12 programmes which trace the history of a family.

Give them a Christmas present they will still be thinking about in 1985.

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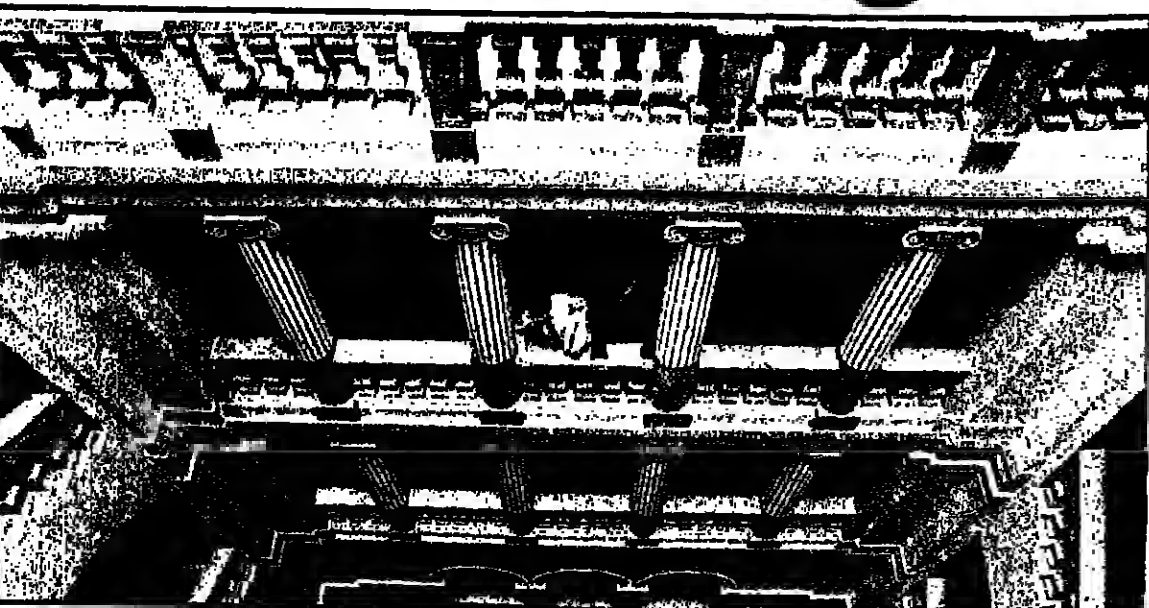
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Cultural heritage



"Heritage '84", the theme by which Britain is being promoted overseas this year, will provide schools with a varied string of exhibitions and happenings.

Celebrating 150 years, the Royal Institution of British Architects is also staging its own festival from May onwards. This will include urban trails, historic walks and tours of buildings, not normally open to the public. Many buildings will also be floodlit for the first time.

As one of its contributions to the year, the Arts Council is staging a major exhibition of English Romanesque Art, 1066-1200. A vast array of stained glass and sculpture from 40 cathedrals and churches is being brought together to show the fusion of Norman with early English styles, and there will also be many rare items from British and foreign museums, including manuscripts and bibles. It will be at the Hayward Gallery, London, from April to July.

Among the anniversaries is Worcester Cathedral's 900th. A programme of special events there culminates in the Three Choirs Music Festival, Europe's oldest, in August. They will include a performance of the "Dream of Gerontius" by Elgar, the son of one of the organists, who died 50 years ago.

Exhibitions and concerts will be marking the death of Dr Johnson, 200 years ago, and John Wycliffe the preacher, 600 years ago, while a Dellsus festival in October is Bradford's principal contribution to the year.

The 40th anniversary of D-Day centres on Portsmouth in June when Operation Remount takes place. There are displays at the Royal Naval and Air Force Museums, a film festival and fly-past of World War II aircraft. The Overlord Embroidery, depicting the operation, is due to be unveiled at its new home in the £1 million D-Day Museum being built near Southsea Castle.

Industrial heritage is the main theme throughout the north west of England. For instance, the 200 year old Quarry Bank Mill at Styal in Cheshire, one of the few surviving water-powered mills, goes back on stream during the summer thanks to the addition of a 100-hp Victorian wheel which will power the textile machinery in the museum.

The Lower Basin of the docks at Ellesmere Port, built in 1843, together with an old railway and the latter's

features to be restored at the Canal Museum there. Four 150-year-old cottages are also being renovated and will depict changes in lifestyle since the last century.

Wales too is highlighting its industrial past, in particular with the opening of a steam railway at the Big Pit Museum, Blaencynon and a series of displays and workshops at the Barsham Industrial Heritage Centre, Wrexham.

Exhibitions of antique Wedgwood pottery (May to October in London), dolls houses from all over the world (Longest House, July to October in aid of the Save the Children Fund) and how the Duke of Argyll moved the town of Inveraray in 1743 to build his castle (April to October) have also been promoted by the Heritage theme.

Gillian Thomas

Details of the Festival of Architecture from the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London W1. Heritage London fair for teachers February 14 at the Barbican Centre. Details from the London Tourist Board, 20 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1.

VIDEO
Charles Dickens and Great Expectations
Penguin Study Video £29.95
Format: VHS or Betamax
(available post free from the Penguin Bookshop, Richmond, and for schools and colleges in London from the ILEA Publishing Centre)

One of the more futile arguments which periodically rage among television critics turns on whether a film adaptation of a literary classic should be judged on its faithfulness to the original or whether it should be judged as something new, a thing-in-itself. No such ambivalence can surround *Charles Dickens and Great Expectations*, whose raison d'être must reside in its capacity to illuminate the book and the life and times of the author.

This inaugural Penguin Study Video takes the form of a dramatized reading, with the historic writer addressing a lively drawing-roomful of Victorians. The film cuts constantly from this cushioned and velvet scene, through voice-overs by Pip, to dramatized scenes from the novel; period authenticity is reinforced at one end of

Chlson 2000

Channel Four

A four-part series

December 10, 17, 31, January 8

How old will you be in the year 2000? Used to think we'd all be living under perspex domes by then, wearing silver boiler suits, but now it doesn't seem so impossible. Remotely. Particularly when you consider that children born last year will only be 18 - hence the title, *Citizen 2000*, of a new series on Channel Four.

The first two programmes, shown a year ago, introduced us to 15 babies born in 1982 and their families. They came from Liverpool, London and Oxfordshire and some originally from Kenya, Bangladesh, the West Indies and Ireland. Some are more educated than others but all are fiercely articulate about their children and their future. It was a fascinating invitation to meet a group of people, on whose lives we'll be eavesdropping for another 17 years.

Last week showed the first of a series of close-ups of the individual children. Matthew (see picture), the subject of *Portrait of a One Year Old*, is the beguiling and active son of a Chinese couple in the restaurant trade in Liverpool. He is at the centre of a loving circle, spreading out through Terry and Teresa, his parents, to his adoring grandparents, waiters in the restaurant and, in the course of filming, all the camera crew and production team.

We saw him being checked for normal responses and milestones by paediatrician Aidan McFarlane, who is adviser to the series. Dr McFarlane (co-author of *Mum - I Feel Funny*, which won the junior *TES* Information Books Award last month) treated the little boy tenderly and his mother as an intelligent adult.

Tomorrow, you can see how the two single mothers in the group have been coping. In *Go On Alone*, Sandra and Kym both have sons, Ross and John

VIDEO

Zoo Animals in the Wild
Coronet Video
Format: VHS

Four cassettes, three films on each tape.
Price £38.00 each
Available from Viewtech, 122 Goldcrest Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol

In some Jungo Book Disneyland where the lion, "smart little mammal of the trees", frisks and the noble elephant takes his dustbath to the accompaniment of tipsy trombones, where lions have manes and tigers don't (Thank God for that or how would we tell them apart?), Coronet bled a child with adenoids and a totally upward-inflected voice to read its exte script about the lives of zoo animals in the wild.

Poor animals, not only do we hunt them down, destroy their habitat and cage them in zoos but now we also have to turn them into animated versions of cuddly toys for the soft educational market. If you are aged six to ten and have never heard of wild animals before - and, alas, I suppose this might come to be more and more likely - it is just possible there might be some educational value in these videos.

We can learn, for instance, that the

Low-down

lion is African and the tiger Asiatic, that baboons are monkeys though they do not live in trees but "they do pretty well in trees, after all, they're monkeys". Beavers always live near water cays". "Beavers always live near water cays". "The pelican egg has a tough shell but that doesn't keep the chick from hatching, does it?"

It's a relief to be given the low-down on Nature's little mysteries in this fashion. And the script never falls to remind us of pertinent details - the usefulness of the elephant's trunk, the pouch under the pelican's beak, the wisdom of the hippo's mouth. It's all in a peculiarly congratulatory style that points out oysters' woodwork. Isn't that ostrich silly? And, aren't those bears actually so curious?

What Jack Hanna, a zoo director, was doing when he advised on these programmes I really wonder. Perhaps the worst sequence is when we are shown tiger cubs "playing" with a spiny badger, as "practical". What could be an interesting zoological point become trivialized and veiled.

Victoria Neumark

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